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CHAPTER 9

Rushdie, Sound, and the Auditory Imagination

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Salman Rushdie is a noisy writer. His prose is filled with sound-play, punning, and onomatopoeia, a commotion akin to the bustling city streets that he is so fond of depicting. His personal story is also a noisy one: the Iranian fatwa against Rushdie in 1989 sparked a clamour unlike anything experienced by a literary author before or since, while over the course of his career, his voice has resounded on topics of cultural import, especially concerning Islam, multiculturalism, and terrorism. For Rushdie, noise is part of the democratic process, a sign of free expression at work. In a key scene in *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008), for instance, we are prompted to nod with approval when Mughal Emperor Akbar gazes on his new debating chamber, declaring: 'Noise is life and an excess of noise is a sign that life is good. There will be time for us all to be quiet when we are safely dead.'[1] He is a writer for whom democratic expression finds itself most at home in hubbub: 'In this world without quiet corners', he writes elsewhere, 'there can be no easy escapes from history, from hullabaloo, from terrible, unquiet fuss'.[2]

Although sound is made manifest in a variety of ways in Rushdie's writing, music is the auditory trope to which he most frequently returns. Whether in the form of flamboyant Hindi film songs, pounding electronic dance music, or deafening stadium rock, this chapter shows that a celebration of music, especially of a loud or noisy kind, has been a consistent feature of his career. The first part of this chapter will explore music in Rushdie's early writing, before the fatwa, with a particular focus on the Club Hot Wax scenes in *The Satanic Verses* (1988). It will argue that this early writing shows a desire to listen to and amplify the sounds of society's margins. The second part will then trace the changes in his post-fatwa writing, concentrating on the links between music and free expression in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999). It will suggest that after the fatwa, the focus on music in Rushdie's writing begins to shed its concern for the margins, morphing instead into a celebration of its universality that

reiterates an association, common in popular media discourse, between fundamentalist Islam and a hatred of freedom.

According to Rachel Sykes, 'the novel is noisy when it is anxious, public and obtrusive'.[3] Noisy novels are 'consumed by the sounds of the present, driven by the desire to speak loudly and convinced of the importance of traumatic "event" both to the present moment and to the lives of future generations'.[4] This description is applicable to all of Rushdie's novels and is literalized in his persistent reliance on music as a theme. In his early work, music repeatedly bursts through the narrative as a joyously insurrectionary force in which identities meld and cultures combine into rapturous new forms. In *Midnight's Children* (1981), a novel that famously foregrounds the olfactory, sound too plays its role. On the one hand, the sounds of old-fashioned colonialism and reactionary postcolonial nationalism both are represented either as monotonous and boring ('the steady beat of Mountbatten's ticktock [. . .] fills our ears with its metronomic, drumming music') or as artificially beautiful.[5] Jamila Singer's singing, for instance, is divine like the spheres: 'her voice was on Voice-Of-Pakistan Radio constantly, so that in the villages of West and East Wings she came to seem like a superhuman being, incapable of being fatigued, an angel who sang to her people through all the days and nights'.[6] It is beautiful, but there is an emphasis on its artifice: she performs like a deity because she has no other choice.

On the other hand, popular democratic sounds are described in messier and more raucous terms. In the Pioneer Café, for instance, a 'real rutputty joint', 'filmi playback music blar[es] out from a cheap radio by the cash-till'.[7] It is the more bumbling, messy, noisy kinds of music lingering around the edges of polite establishment society that Rushdie points towards as the sound of real democracy in action: not polished, state-sanctioned, or divine, but unruly and of the people. It is no accident that when his protagonist, Saleem Sinai, who already has a fantastically powerful sense of smell, discovers that he can also telepathically spy on and explore the lives of anybody he wishes to across India, he calls this newfound power his 'inner ear'.[8]

Much has been written about the *visual* in Rushdie's writing, and especially his attraction to action hidden from plain sight, visible but unseen.[9] What the marginal sounds that abound in *Midnight's Children* indicate, however, is that what Vassilena Parashkevova has termed its 'urban di-versification' has an auditory dimension, too: Rushdie's early writing has a fascination with sounds *audible but unheard*.[10] This fascination with unheard – or underground – sounds is evident in *Shame* (1983),

too, as well as in his 1980s nonfiction. However, it is in *The Satanic Verses* that Rushdie's use of music to disrupt and subvert comes to full fruition. Famously, the story is told by the Devil: at the close of its first chapter, the narrator says, 'Who am I? Let's put it this way: who has the best tunes?' Indeed, the novel's opening sentences subtly meld east and west through music: '"To be born again," sang Gibreel Farishta tumbling from the heavens, "first you have to die. Ho ji! Ho ji!"'[11] In the next paragraph, Gibreel continues: 'I tell you, you must die, I tell you, I tell you':[12] a slight reworking of the lyrics to 'Alabama Song', a poem originally by Bertolt Brecht, but that has itself been 'born again' as a song in many renditions over the years, most famously by the Doors (but also, in various guises, by Kurt Weill, David Bowie, and others). Gibreel's 'Ho ji!' and elsewhere his 'Tak tha!' meld Jim Morrison with Bombay film sounds: American rock 'n' roll combined with Bombay dance fuse in the way both genres have tended to offer platforms for the celebration of sexuality, youthful excess, and – most notably – temptation. The popular characterization of rock 'n' roll, in particular, as 'the devil's music' is a motif throughout this novel: 'Sympathy for the Devil: a new lease of life for an old tune.'[13]

However, despite the novel's many homages to rock 'n' roll, it is dance music that sits at its political heart, in the form of the sounds on offer at the edgy Club Hot Wax, a venue 'where the beat meets the street'.[14] The rebellious, anti-colonial history of the club, formerly the 'Blak-An-Tan', is signified from the moment Rushdie's protagonist, Gibreel Farishta, steps inside. Like the sounds that populate *Midnight's Children*, the music here needs to be sought out: it is literally 'underground, and through an unmarked door'.[15] The club is a place of mixing, the music eclectic – 'hip-hop and hindi-pop' – and drawing a crowd that has 'converged from all quarters of the neighbourhood'.[16] This mixing of genres reflects an emergent clubbing trend in the late 1980s, in which young, second-generation South Asians across Britain began attending clubs with 'DJs who mixed bhangra with reggae, soul and hip hop, creating a new sound': a progenitor of what would later become known as 'Bombay jungle'.[17] Meanwhile, the 'on-off rainbow brilliance of the *space*' in Hot Wax is presented in similarly utopian terms: 'What's within?' the narrator asks. 'Lights, fluids, powders, bodies shaking themselves, singly, in pairs, in threes, moving towards possibilities.'[18] The club represents something akin to what music writer Simon Reynolds describes as 'utopia in its original etymological sense: a nowhere/nowhen wonderland, where time is abolished, where the self evanesces through merging with an anonymous multitude and drowning in a bliss-blitz of light and noise'.[19] More

broadly, the club and its attendees can be seen to exhibit what, in *Sonic Agency*, Brandon LaBelle terms 'insurrectionary sensibility', in which sound and listening are mobilized in ways that are 'conducive to empathy and compassion . . . [and] interruptive potential'.[20]

This insurrectionary sensibility comes clearly to the fore as the club night in Hot Wax pushes on, and the reason for the venue's name becomes starkly apparent. The dance floor is peppered with waxwork mannequins, each representing a different figure from British Commonwealth history, from Mary Seacole to Grace Jones (both Jamaican), via Queen Victoria's Muslim Indian attendant Abdul Karim. In a different part of the room, however – and 'bathed in an evil green light' – is another set of dolls, this time representing the fascist and anti-immigrant British right: 'Mosley, Powell, Edward Long, all the local avatars of Legree'.[21] A chant of 'Meltdown, meltdown, melt' begins to grow amongst the attendees, and the club's enigmatic, cyberpunkish DJ, Pinkwalla, then takes his cue. Curtains part to reveal a large oven ('Hell's Kitchen') with a seat in it (the 'Hot Seat'), and Pinkwalla, arms stretched wide, asks the crowd: '*Who's-it-gonna-be? Who-you-wanna-see?*'[22] The imminent ritual becomes abundantly clear: one of the mannequins is going to get liquified – literally melted down – in the oven, to the glee of the multicultural clubbers, and it quickly becomes apparent which it is going to be: 'Her permawaved coiffure, her pearls, her suit of blue. *Maggie-maggie-maggie*, bays the crowd. *Burn-burn-burn*.'[23] The Thatcher doll (or '*guy*', as Rushdie's narrator mischievously points out) is strapped into the 'Hot Seat', before Pinkwalla turns on the heat. 'O how prettily she melts', the narrator says, 'from the inside out, crumpling into formlessness. Then she is a puddle, and the crowd sighs its ecstasy: *done*. "The fire this time," Pinkwalla tells them. Music regains the night.'[24]

As with the references to Jim Morrison and Bombay cinema in the novel's opening scene, this passage is also filled with pointed cultural references. 'The fire this time' is, of course, a reworking (and literalization) of the title of James Baldwin's furious 1963 extended essay on American racism, *The Fire Next Time*, while 'Music regains the night' contains a subtle evocation of the British feminist movement, 'Reclaim the Night', perhaps as a way of signalling that the 'melting down' of Thatcher's effigy is not intended to be read in a misogynistic way. Pinkwalla's affectation of Caribbean patois, despite his South Asian roots, meanwhile evokes the rebelliously multimodal dub-poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson or Oku Oneora, which 'relies upon the incommensurability between textuality and aurality'.[25] All three references position the meltdown ritual – and

the club more broadly – within a lineage of late twentieth-century political radicalism, signposting a widespread discontent with Thatcher's policies among the disenfranchised ethnic minority youths present at the club. As Leela Gandhi argues, 'The politics of the Hot Wax Club are, in microcosm, the politics of *The Satanic Verses*; recognizing the line from Powell through to Thatcher as marking the emergence in England of a virulent conservative nationalism.'[26] Pinkwalla's club celebrates difference: while there is mixing and melding and even metamorphosis, at Hot Wax the melting pot is reserved for Maggie. The reference to the crowd's 'ecstasy', too, offers a nod to the MDMA-fuelled acid house culture emergent in the 1980s: chemically infused raves that fostered a sense of euphoric collectivity and communal joy (eventually leading to 1989's so-called second summer of love). The Thatcher government and its acolytes clamped down on the scene with force, fostering a moral panic over its association with drugs and the disturbance caused by its noise. In keeping with the satanic theme, raves became one of the decade's most prominent folk devils, with Conservative-supporting tabloids taking particular delight in their demonization (typical headlines included 'Evil of Ecstasy' and 'Acid House Horror').[27]

The novel's implication, when the club is eventually raided, is that it is precisely the 'satanic' possibilities for 'new freedoms and responsibilities' that Hot Wax's subcultural musical space so vibrantly poses that render it a threat to the authorities. Indeed, it is significant that the raid is described as an auditory assault: 'A helicopter hovers over the nightclub. The machine of state bearing down upon its enemies. [. . .] The noise of rotor blades drowns out the noise of the crowd.'[28] What this passage does, however, is to *re-amplify* the drowned-out crowd's noise for the reader: the literal disquiet of the club's attendees, drowned out by the machinic noise of the state, is transposed into a figurative disquiet in the narrative itself. It is in moments like this that the novel uses sound to make a noise about the silencing of Britain's racialized communities.

Although, thirty years on from the *Satanic Verses* affair, the novel is most often remembered for the way it antagonized Muslims around the world, scenes like these at Club Hot Wax are testament to its angry support for Britain's ethnic minority communities in the face of state-sponsored racism. There is, of course, a debate to be had about the success of the novel's anti-nationalist politics overall: Gandhi, for instance, argues that these politics are undermined by the novel's implicit reliance on the sexist and homophobic trope of 'colonial emasculation',[29] while Rehana Ahmed has suggested that Rushdie's 'silencing of class as dissent reveals the novel's

liberalism and the limits of this liberalism for an anti-racist politics'.[30] Likewise, Anshuman A. Mondal has questioned the ethics of Rushdie's representation of the Prophet Muhammad.[31] Nonetheless, *The Satanic Verses* clearly attempts to 'punch up', rather than down. While there is certainly a tension in the novel between the individual and the collective, its repeated foregrounding of polyphonic music and musical spaces works to mobilize this tension in a constructive way: it shows that the line between individual expression and collective experience is often a blurred one, and neither ultimately emerges triumphant over the other.

Given the rebellious sentiment detectable in the music of Rushdie's early novels, it is noticeable, then, that with the publication of his most overtly music-themed novel a decade later, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (a reworking of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice), the insurrectionary political anger has largely dissipated from his writing. While not overtly punching down, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* is a novel of the political centre-ground. Published two years into Tony Blair's then-popular New Labour government, and on the cusp of Rushdie's move across the Atlantic to begin a new life amidst the New York glitterati (where he aimed to defy the fatwa through 'a deliberate policy of being seen in public'),[32] a dampening of his earlier leftism might not have come as such a surprise.

There is – as with much of Rushdie's post-fatwa writing – an implicit repudiation in the novel of what its author has come to characterize, repeatedly, as the forces of 'tyranny, bigotry, intolerance, [and] fanaticism'.[33] Against these he pits the liberties of difference, diversity, democracy, and artistic expression, which all received a new emphasis in the 1990s after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the release and rise to power of Nelson Mandela, and the Rushdie affair itself. These events were frequently pitched as paradigm-shifting moments in the struggle between democracy and authoritarianism (a dialectic that was invoked again two years after the publication of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, following the 9/11 attacks). According to Sykes, 'any focus on a singular event is noisy as a narrative conceit', and by this logic *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* is cacophonous.[34] Less a 'state of the nation' novel than a 'state of world' novel, it clearly embodies what James Wood has influentially termed the style of 'hysterical realism', popular amongst authors like Rushdie at the turn of the century: an inherently noisy genre that 'seems to want to abolish stillness, as if ashamed of silence'.[35]

In an echo of Rushdie's earlier claim that literature enables its reader to 'hear voices in every possible way', the novel's narrator, Rai, declares early on: 'Sound and silence. Silence and sound. This is a story of lives pulled

together and pushed apart by what happens in (and between) our ears.'[36] A connection is established between hearing and reading, and evocations of the oral storytelling style of Homeric epic help to emphasize this throughout. This is particularly clear in its opening, where its noisy narrative conceit is established with the pomp of a Greek chorus:

> Wherein lies the power of songs? [. . .] Chinese opera, jazz, the blues: that such things should exist, that we should have discovered the magical intervals and distances that yield the poor cluster of notes, all within the span of a human hand, from which we can build our cathedrals of sound, is as alchemical a mystery as mathematics, or wine, or love.[37]

One need not disagree with Rai's wonderment at the diversity of music here to recognize the grandiloquence in his tone: this is a storytelling style that has shifted wholesale, within the space of a decade, from allying itself subversively with the devilish to advocating for a kind of universal, secular divine. The novel's abiding moral is that human creation is, as Ormus Cama puts it, 'the original innovator', and as such to be revered, while 'the span of a human hand' is, to any reader familiar with Rushdie's own life story, a celebration of secular creation that also functions as a swipe at the forces of religion that so quickly turned his life upside down. Even the narrator's name, Rai, is suggestive here: in 1994, Salafists murdered the popular Algerian raï singer, Cheb Hasni, in protest at the perceived immorality of his lyrics, and clearly Rushdie identified with this tragedy. However, understandable though Rushdie's motivations here might be in light of his own experiences, the novel's emphasis on music as a universally shared joy, regardless of form or genre, at times ends up reproducing the homogenizing 'melting pot' conception of multiculturalism that *The Satanic Verses* so purposefully resists. In the context of what Stuart Hall terms 'the class struggle in and over culture', the novel's cosmopolitan cacophony serves to obscure an underlying silence on the relationship between pop music and power.[38]

The Ground Beneath Her Feet ostentatiously (and sometimes rather cornily) celebrates freedom and diversity through its focus on music in all its diverse global forms:

> the sexiness of the Cuban horns, the mind-bending patterns of the Brazilian drums, the Chilean woodwinds moaning like the winds of oppression, the African male voice choruses like trees swaying in freedom's breeze, the grand old ladies of Algerian music with their yearning squawks and ululations, the holy passion of the Pakistani *qawwals*.[39]

Ormus Cama, the novel's Orpheus, believes that rock music 'settled for too little', so he 'wants to work with what he calls the full orchestra,

meaning not stiffs in tuxes but the full range of musical emotional intellectual yes and moral possibility'.[40] In today's lexicon, such an approach might be termed cultural appropriation (a fact complicated only slightly by Ormus's Indian background: by this point he is, after all, a famous rock star, and in any case hails from a wealthy upper-middle-class family; see Chapter 18). By melting down genres into a homogeneous whole, the novel tends to occlude the complex material 'world-systems' of which they are a part.[41] Instead, they at times come to resemble the decontextualized genre of 'world music' that, as Rupa Huq points out, is ultimately a western-centric marketing category: 'World music is frequently seen as the archetypally "authentic" musical style of our times. The genre is usually associated with third world or non-western countries (or migrant minorities), and in this way it can be seen as a Euro-centric or western-constructed term.'[42] Rai goes on to describe Ormus's new worldly inclination as evidence that he has 'started to speak in this big new voice', a comment through which Rushdie's own authorial ambitions shine through, loudly and clearly: like Ormus's music, he seems to suggest, this is the sort of 'big voiced' novel necessary for the globalized age. However, there is a problem here: as Franco Moretti has provocatively suggested, 'World literature cannot be literature, bigger; what we are already doing, just more of it. It has to be different.'[43] It is this difference that is lost in the novel: where *The Satanic Verses* foregrounds the complexities of cultural difference and encourages its readers to *listen* to the marginal sounds around them, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* plays down this difference.

The novel tries hard to foreground the ways in which eastern and western styles are inextricably entwined ('the West was in Bombay from the beginning, impure old Bombay [. . .], and so Westernness was a legitimate part of Ormus, a Bombay part, inseparable from the rest of him').[44] However, it does so in a way that de-emphasizes the ongoing fallout of British imperial history in India. While, at first glance, the novel's celebration of cultural diversity and mixing might invite some comparison with the noisy intermingling of musical genres in Club Hot Wax, in this case diverse sounds are reduced to a more simplistic ideological binary.

Rushdie makes a claim for the kind of authenticity that Huq describes in his frequent celebrations of rock music. In an article on his relationship with U2, he defends the authenticity of live music in 'the age of choreographed, instrument-less little-boy and little-girl bands'.[45] Elsewhere, he discusses the role of rock music in bringing down Communism, citing Václav Havel's emphasis on its importance to the Czech resistance from the Prague Spring to the fall of the Berlin Wall, and

explicitly aligning it with freedom: 'The music of freedom frightens people and unleashes all manner of conservative defence mechanisms.'[46] With this in mind, it is notable that *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* has at its heart a pirate radio station called 'Radio Freddie', whose name evokes the American propaganda station Radio Free Europe, which was set up during the Cold War to broadcast pro-western ideology to countries within the Soviet bloc. In Rushdie's version, the station is a grassroots operation that celebrates rock and pop in all its cultural forms. As such, his choice of a name that evokes the existing American station belies the way in which the novel repeatedly aligns music with a particular version of the concept of freedom, ostensibly rootless and global, but in reality inflected by Anglo-American liberalism and the argument that western-style liberal democracy had ascended in triumph over the twentieth century's various totalitarianisms.

Consoling though this worldview may be in Rushdie's highly unusual circumstances (and perhaps even necessary, as a means of maintaining sanity), it is clearly also reductive: by lumping complex cultures together under the banners of freedom, diversity, and democracy, the novel works to obscure the hierarchies of power that underlie cultural exchange in the era of multinational globalization. If *The Satanic Verses* uses music to make a sound on behalf of the voiceless against an overwhelming media backdrop of racist noise about immigration, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* evidences a shift towards the celebration of noise as a virtue in its own right.

Rushdie's writing since *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* has continued to rely on the veneration of music as a metaphor for the veneration of freedom and free expression. Sometimes this has been accompanied by a greater degree of self-reflexivity than at other times. For example, in *Shalimar the Clown* (2005), the tokenistic 'world music' of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* is replaced by closer and more careful attention to the diversity of music in Kashmir, with a particular focus on its power to transcend sectarian tensions: 'Music, too, was agreed on without too much dispute. The *santoor*, the *sarangi*, the *rabab*, the *harmonium* were nonsectarian instruments, after all. Professional *bachkot* singers and musicians were hired and ordered to alternate Hindu *bhajans* and Sufi hymns.'[47] *The Enchantress of Florence*, meanwhile, moves back to a celebration of noisiness as a virtue, albeit with a renewed sense of the fun and mischief so lacking in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*: 'There was a constant hubbub here, the noise of the kingdom's finest thinkers gashing one another dreadfully with their words.'[48]

However, it is Rushdie's 2015 novel, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights*, that arguably contains his most revealing passage

on music outside of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. Appearing twenty-six years after the fatwa and fourteen after 9/11, but still a year before the 2016 election of Donald Trump (with which his subsequent novels – *The Golden House* (2017) and *Quichotte* (2019) – both explicitly engaged), *Two Years* does not clearly respond to a world-shaking traumatic 'event' in the same way as many of his other major novels. As a result, it is arguably amongst Rushdie's less 'noisy' texts (going by Sykes's definition). Passages like the following seem to pull in two directions, between two Rushdies, pre- and post-fatwa:

> Out of the flames came the turbaned firebrand, a small man with Yosemite Sam saffron beard and eyebrows, wrapped in a strong smell of smoke [. . .]. There is indeed a plague spreading, he thundered [. . .]. It was carried by books, films, dances, paintings, but music was what he feared and hated most, because music slid beneath the thinking mind to seize the heart; and of all music makers, one, the worst of them all, the plague personified as cacophony, evil transmuted into sound.[49]

As in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, free expression is again represented here by music, and pitted against the tyranny represented by a kind of unfreedom that, it is now even more heavily implied, is to be associated with Islamist extremism: Yusuf Ifrit, the 'turbaned firebrand' with a 'Yosemite Sam saffron beard', obviously, again, evokes the familiar media image of a gesticulating Islamic hate preacher. Once again, music and other forms of artistic expression are characterized, in his cartoonishly fundamentalist view, as a 'virus', 'infecting' people. Ifrit sees it as a kind of 'impurity': the core of what Rushdie has made it his mission to celebrate across the entirety of his oeuvre. Moreover, it is significant that it is music, rather than writing, that Ifrit 'feared and hated most'.

However, the description of music as having a subliminal quality, 'slid [ing] beneath the thinking mind to seize the heart', suggests that Rushdie is here not *just* using music as a straightforward cipher for his own writing: more than this, music has the ability to get beneath the skin in a particular kind of way. A novel requires one to actively choose to read it, but with music, unless one plugs one's ears, switches it off, or leaves the room, an affective response is inescapable. Emotions are activated by music without choice (even if these emotions are negative): it confirms the listener's human subjectivity, as well as the 'cacophony' of their identity in relation to other listening subjects.

The passage exemplifies Rushdie's post-fatwa writing on sound at its most fraught. On the one hand, the affective infectiousness of music – its *catchiness* – is, undeniably, one of its most powerful qualities (even if the

affect produced is dislike or disgust). On the other, by placing his celebration of music's joyous cacophony in the context of yet another bald and simplistic swipe at Islamist fundamentalism (one that reproduces the often reductive binaries of counterterrorist discourse), he undermines this very cacophony: the more open, free-flowing cultural mixing promoted in the descriptions of Club Hot Wax in *The Satanic Verses* is superseded by a mixing that is less open. While the idea of a virtuous impurity is clearly still attractive to Rushdie, its practice is now more superficial. If *The Satanic Verses* uses music's infectiousness to 'punch up' at the racism at the heart of British society, this passage, even if ostensibly aimed at only a minority of extremists, effectively 'punches down' at Muslims more broadly, because of the prominent platform that Rushdie occupies in public discourse and the relative power this platform bestows on him. At the time of writing this chapter, Rushdie is, against his will, uncharacteristically quiet, as he recovers from the brutal stabbing of 12 August 2022. Thankfully he has survived, and will live to make his voice heard once again. When, in time, he does, it will be amplified even more than usual. Rushdie's voice is *loud* and has an impact on the Islamophobic 'mood music' surrounding Muslims in many parts of the world, whether he intends it to or not. By consistently reasserting binaries like those from which he ostensibly aims to break free, vulnerable communities continue to sustain collateral damage, like he has done, in a futile and seemingly endless battle between destructive ideologies.

Notes

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3 Rachel Sykes, *The Quiet Contemporary American Novel* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 49.
4 Ibid.
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7 Ibid., 298.
8 Ibid., 226, 233, 239.
9 See, for example, Vassilena Parashkevova, '"Turn Your Watch Upside Down in Bombay and You See the Time in London": Catoptric Urban Configurations in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*', *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 42, no. 3 (2007): 5–24.
10 Ibid., 10.

11 Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* (1988; London: Vintage, 1998), 3.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 286.
14 Ibid., 291.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
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27 Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 59–60.
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29 Gandhi, '"Ellowen, Deeowen"', 166.
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32 Salman Rushdie, *Joseph Anton: A Memoir* (2012; London: Vintage, 2013), 594.
33 Salman Rushdie, *Step Across This Line: Collected Non-Fiction, 1992–2002* (2002; London: Vintage, 2003), 297.
34 Sykes, *Quiet Contemporary American Novel*, 62.
35 James Wood, 'Human, All Too Inhuman', *New Republic*, 24 July 2000, https://newrepublic.com/article/61361/human-inhuman.
36 Salman Rushdie, *Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999; London: Vintage, 2000), 47.
37 Ibid., 19.
38 Stuart Hall, 'Notes on Deconstructing the "Popular"', in *Essential Essays, vol. 1: Foundations of Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 347–62, 356.
39 Rushdie, *Ground Beneath Her Feet*, 379.

40 Ibid.
41 See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, vols. 1–3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, 1980, 1989), and WReC (Warwick Research Collective), *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015).
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43 Moretti quoted in WReC, *Combined*, 8.
44 Rushdie, *Ground Beneath Her Feet*, 95–6.
45 Rushdie, *Step Across This Line*, 106.
46 Ibid., 301.
47 Salman Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown* (2005; London: Vintage, 2006), 112–13.
48 Rushdie, *Enchantress*, 97.
49 Salman Rushdie, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* (2015; London: Vintage, 2016), 165–6.