COSMODERNISM # American Narrative, Late Globalization, and the New Cultural Imaginary

Christian Moraru
CONTENTS

PROLOGUE • TOGETHERNESS

Vingt ans apres; or, No Place to Hide 1
Approach, Focus, Structure 5
Acknowledging Others 11

INTRODUCTION • THE COSMODERN IMAGINARY

1. Relatedness 15
   The Relational Scene 15
   Cosmodern, Cosmodernism, Cosmodernity 18
   Appositions: The Scandal of "We" and the New Authenticity 20
   Of Allergy: Ontology, Ethics, and a Cosmodern Brief 25
   Late Globalization and the Cosmodern Double-Bind 33
   The Contest of Orders 37

2. Cosmodern Environmentalism: A Code of Worldly Conduct 41
   II n'y a pas d'hors risque 41
   Culture of Risk, Culture at Risk: The "Indeterminate
   Cosmos" and the Egological 44
   Egology into Ecology 48
   "Only the 'with'": "Globe," mundus, and the
   Ethos of Collegiality 51

3. With-ness and the Epistemological Imaginary 57
   Collegiality, Episteme, Cultural History 58
   Fragments of an Interdisciplinary Genealogy 62

PARTI • IDIOMATICs

1. Cosmodernism and Vernacularism 77
   The "New Linguistic Order" and the
   Murmur of Foreignness //
Language, Ownership, and the "Monolingualism of the Other" 79
Norm, Mastery, and the Vernacular 82

2. Glossolalia: Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker* and Cosmodern Nativity 86
Legends, Spies, and "Ethnic Coverage" 86
The Whitman Code 91
The Face, the Voice, and the Voice-over 95
Vocation and Calling: From Gaze to Language 100

3. Cacophony: Federman the Lingovert 108
The Grammar of Betrayal 108
The Repetitive, the Patrimonial, and the Ethical: *Return to Manure* 112
Being, Speaking, and the Unspeakable 114
The Voice and the Name 118

PART 2 • ONOMASTICS

1. The Names of the World 121
Heritage, Contingence, Cosmonomastics 121
Patrimony, Patronymy, Heteronomy 123

2. Namesakes 127
Global Gogol: Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* 127
Paronomasia; or, Embracing the World 130

3. "Through a filter of associations and links": The Name of Homeyness 134
*A Gesture Life* and the Onomastic Contest 134
Relations, Relatives, Realty: Belonging and the Ethics of Naming 138

4. The "Infamous Other": Onomachy 145
*Aloft*'s Embattled Names 145
Benjamin Franklin to Roland Barthes 148
Onomastic Transference 153
Naming, Translating 155
PART 3 • TRANSLATIONS

1. The Translational, the Relational, and the Cosmodern 157
   No Joking Matter: The Chasm and the Chiasma 157
   The Un/translatable; or, Founded in Translation 162
   Philology, History, Critique 164
   Culturalism, "Relational Semantics," Cosmodernism: Translation and Difference 168
   Lost and Found: Translation, Self-Translation, and the Production of the Human 170

2. Geopolitics of Desire 175
   Remade in China: Nicole Mones, Lost in Translation 175
   La planetisation: A grand recit? 177
   Paleontology, Totality, Diversity 182
   "The natural mutation of things" 186

3. Translation, Mistranslation, Countertranslation 190
   Cognition, Cognition, Re-cognition 190
   Fudging the Answers: Suki Kim's The Interpreter; or, Translation as Hubris 192
   Lolita in the Bronx 195
   Translatability and Readability 200

PART 4 • READINGS

1. Cosmodern Interpretive Communities 203
   Other-Reading 203
   Call, Response, Transaction 206
   Cultural Studies without Cultures? Cosmopolitan Reading 209
   Cultural Studies with Cultures: Cosmodern Reading 213

2. Against Solipsism 219
   Meteorology of Reading: Lolita in Tehran 219
   Traveling in Books 224
   Solipsism, Egology, Autocracy 228

3. "Each was the hidden key to the other": Reading the Sufis in California 233
   Bright Ardor 233
Ruminations: Pico Iyer's *Abandon* 235
"Falling into a new relation": The World of Symbols 238

4. Friendships across Death: Alice Randall's Pushkin 242
   The Russian Shakespeare 242
   Politics of Friendship 245

PART 5 • METABOLICS

1. The Metastatic 253
   Cosmodernism, Inc.: The Body, the World, and the Haptic 253
   The Perfect Crime 258
   *Underworlds* Dietrology; or, Know Thy Garbage 261
   Heterology: The Decalogue of Waste 264
   The Aura of Reproduction 267
   Montage and "Ethical Strength" 272

2. The Metamorphic 275
   Performance 275
   "Engineered Transpositions"; or, Updike's Tropical Romance 279
   Tropics, Tropisms, Allotropes 283
   DeLillo's Body Art: Cosmetics and Cosmoderns 290

EPILOGUE • POSTMODERNISM INTO COSMODERNISM? 295
   Time, Achrony, and "Furtive Sameness" 295
   Future and Futures: The Digital Imperative 299
   Time and Its Others, History before Time:
      The Cosmodern Imperative 303
   The Cosmodern Turn 307

NOTES 317

BIBLIOGRAPHY 361

INDEX 389