

**Book Review: *Cosmodeism: A Worldview for the Space-Age: How an Evolutionary Cosmos is Creating God* by Tsvi Bisk**

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*Cosmodeism: A Worldview for the Space-Age: How an Evolutionary Cosmos is Creating God* by Tsvi Bisk. Westphalia Press, 2025. 368pp.

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Bisk begins his latest work *Cosmodeism: A Worldview for the Space-Age: How an Evolutionary Cosmos is Creating God* with the cosmodeist aphorism that “in the end an evolutionary cosmos will have created God.” This intentionally contrasts with the statement made at the outset of the Bible that “in the beginning, God created the heaven

and the Earth.” This polarity stands as the main differentiation between an Abrahamic conception of the divine (i.e., as a god immanent, omniscient and providential), and a cosmodeist one, namely, that God does not yet exist but will do in the future as a result of the natural evolution of the cosmos. Bisk posits that human beings may benefit from this cosmic evolutionary process by becoming subjects of it and thereby ascending to god status. This transformation of the cosmos which human beings have the opportunity to benefit from is called the Cosmotheistic Hypothesis which was originally developed by Israeli political theorist and philosopher Mordecai Nessayahu. The reason for Bisk’s present work is his attempt to fully transition Nessayahu’s Cosmotheistic Hypothesis into Cosmodeism. Bisk posits that Cosmodeism is a more comprehensive belief system suitable for an audience of the twenty-first century as it addresses more directly many of the crises that humanity currently faces.

Bisk frames Cosmodeism using a three-step method in this work: (1) by laying out the “existential predicaments” and “post-modern crises” of current civilisation; (2) by rebuffing notions of de-development and general pessimism with propositions imbued with cosmic optimism; and (3) by using remnants of Nessayahu’s most intelligible writings combined with religious and secular examples to leverage both a legacy and an explicit need for the Cosmodeistic

Hypothesis. Bisk succeeds in proving a need for the application of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis with his rational and evidenced-based challenge to the contemporary notion that there is a limit to human growth. Bisk firmly rejects the suggestion that human efforts should be concentrated on humbly preserving what we have rather than executing a grand plan to unearth new resources that could put the natural environment at risk. Bisk seems averse to organised religion in this work but does posit his writings as a form of speculative natural theology due to the significant theological implications of his Cosmodeistic Hypothesis which Bisk also suggests can synthesise the Axial Age and the Enlightenment Age.

Bisk portrays the process of evolution as infinite and one that will continue until it results in the creation of a consciousness that resembles God regardless of humanity's engagement with the process. In the Cosmodeist framework, God does not yet exist but will be created through the process of evolution. Hence, the inherent purpose of the cosmos is to create God which Bisk suggests is a resolution to the problem of the apparent meaningless of individual human life because we have the opportunity as individuals and as a collective species to benefit from this process of cosmic evolution. As an Astronist, I see Nessyahu and now Bisk's proposition on evolution as highly similar—if not identical—the salvific process of transcension

and to Cosmist Nikolai Fyodorov conception of the Common Task. Bisk's work tells the story of the development of Cosmodeism through both his personal reflections on the meaning of life and the cosmos as well as through the writings of his former colleague and friend Nesyahu. This is a work of sentiment on behalf of Bisk reflecting on his life and that of his friend, but it is also a work of development in the sense that Bisk clarifies Cosmodeism by expanding on the philosophical groundwork that Nesyahu commenced in the 1950s.

Bisk faces the most fundamental existential questions in this work, these having emerged as a result of both advancements in science and the emergence of scientism. Fundamentally, Cosmodeism challenges nihilism which Bisk argues has become pervasive because of how scientific discoveries have left human beings feeling discomforted. Our former self-confidence as a species rested on the assurances religion gave to us that we have meaningful lives but this contentedness has been rattled by our realisation that we no longer live in what Bisk describes as a "cozy universe" in which human beings are important. Cosmodeism triumphs over nihilism by unequivocally asserting a meaning to life in the universe which is assured through cosmic evolution. Thus, built into the very fabric of the cosmos is a meaning that all sapient beings can apply to themselves for solace and assurance.

Included in Bisk's work are two books, the first titled *Our Age of Discontent* which explains the existential predicaments of the modern era. Many questions have been answered by science but these discoveries have raised many more, in turn causing an existential and moral dilemma for humankind. Bisk then goes on to lay out several crises humanity is facing from the scientific to the philosophical and religious to the psychological and material. In these chapters, Bisk presents the theoretical groundwork necessary for justifying humanity's ascent to *Homo divinitas* which Bisk explores fully in book two of this work. The hallmark of a religion or philosophy or hypothesis that is what I call 'analiptic' (i.e., affirms some form of transcension), is cosmic optimism which Bisk clearly conveys in this work. For example, in chapter ten, Bisk calls out the "sanctimonious self-indulgence" of those who advocate for the end of growth. He clashes in this work with those who propound any form of cosmic pessimism or apocalypticism which in layman's terms asserts a philosophy of "we're doomed."

Bisk's presentation of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis is generally far more optimistic about the human future as long as humanity continues to adhere to the traditional American "can do" attitude. However, this condition placed on humanity's cosmic future casts some doubt over the assurances of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis, particularly the specific

fate of humanity under cosmic evolution. This highlights a difference between Astronism's transcension and the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis. In Astronism, transcension is workable for human beings and since Astronism is pantheistic, humans can also depend to a degree on divine intervention to guide humanity back to God. Cosmodeism—as a form of deism—does not possess this same faculty as the execution of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis conveys cosmic evolution as a natural process that is less malleable and somewhat preset or otherwise fixed. Curious also is the connection Bisk makes between the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis and environmentalism in chapter ten in which he explicitly identifies himself as a humanistic environmentalist (i.e., a person who cares for a clean environment because it is good for human beings). This is similar to the view held by Astronists who believe that the purpose of natural resources is so that they can be used by sapient species for the sake of progressing transcension. Bisk's humanistic environmentalist view—which emphasises the “infinite resource of the human mind”—corresponds with a cornucopian approach and is a direct result of Bisk's adherence to the broader philosophy of cosmic optimism.

Bisk's 'no nonsense' outline of what needs to take place practically when it comes to environmental issues is refreshing, especially in the field of space religion because Astronist publications tend to be more

theoretical and religious and thereby more idealistic and sometimes even utopian. Bisk's discussion of what practical steps need to be taken can indeed be applied to the context of Cosmism's Common Task and Astronism's transcension as these corresponding concepts share the same fundamental optimism as Bisk and Nesyahu's Cosmodeistic Hypothesis. The key subject in Bisk's plan is growth and he focuses on identifying avenues for human beings to unlock limitless growth. Cosmodeism tends to focus on the potential for material growth among species while Astronism—despite acknowledging the essential role of material growth—tends instead to focus on intellectual and spiritual growth as a means of progressing transcension.

However, it must be remembered that Bisk treats Cosmodeism not as a religion but merely as a hypothesis. For example, he spends much of part four of this work discussing Nesyahu's theories as mere conjectures, including in this writings many cosmological, economic and theological dimensions of his friend's work. In particular, in the conclusion to part four, Bisk provides a useful explanation of Nesyahu's cosmology of a finite cosmos evolving out of an infinite universe, in turn the cosmology of Cosmodeism distinguishes between cosmos and universe which is similar to the Astronist cosmology. Combining this with how the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis advocates a form of transcension, Cosmodeism is brought theoretically closer to

Astronism. It was particularly enjoyable to read at the beginning of chapter four about the approach Bisk had taken to “paraphrase, condense and expand on” the writings of his former colleague and friend which again highlights the sentiment in his work and gives the sense that there is a personal history here as to why Bisk has conducted such an extensive exposition on Cosmodeism.

While I fully appreciate Bisk’s need to rewrite or reframe Nesyahu’s writings to make them more readable for a contemporary audience, it would have been even more fascinating and indeed useful—particularly for historians—to have included more extensive direct quotations from Nesyahu’s original work, especially since Nesyahu’s original writings are not publicly available in English. On a related note, I think there is certainly a gap in the literature for a full exegesis of Nesyahu’s original works, especially his 1953 work *Cosmic Science and the Scientific Society*. I think Bisk is the only person who could conduct such an exegesis with sufficient accuracy to Nesyahu’s original thoughts, especially with how Bisk describes Nesyahu’s writings in this work as highly technical and exhausting for the average reader. This type of research would make suitable content for the *Journal of Astronist Studies* and so I welcome Bisk to make some contributions to a future volume. I hope that this type of research will naturally develop once the discourse on space religion and space

philosophy attracts more attention from academics. Also important to note is Bisk's contribution of renaming Nesyahu's Cosmotheism to Cosmodeism based on his opinion that the 'theism' element of the original term placed too much emphasis on a supernatural god beyond natural laws while Bisk postulates that the term 'Cosmodeism' places its focus on natural theology and is superior due to its closer alignment with logic and science.

Bisk's work will be useful to any scholar of the field of Astronist studies and space religions as well as the broader study of new religious movements. It is essential reading for anyone merely curious about Cosmodeism given that Nesyahu's writings are still untranslated from Hebrew, thus making them inaccessible to a Western audience. In particular, both Astronists and Cosmists will be interested in this work, not only because it can serve as a companion to Cosmodeism but because it can help us to understand to a greater depth the concepts that relate Cosmodeism to similar movements like Astronism. Bisk's work makes a crucial addition to the discourse on space religions and sheds light on the complexities of Cosmodeist thought, including how this tradition has developed from Nesyahu to Bisk. The post-Scientific Revolution anxiety is also well-captured in Bisk's writings which leverages an explicit need for a planned execution of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis.

Bisk gives us various intimations to the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis across religious traditions—Jewish, Christian, Muslim and ‘Asian’ including Dharmic and Taoic—which makes a significant contribution to the field in a never-before-seen comparison of space religion (what I would call the Astronic religious tradition) to other religious traditions. The secular intimations of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis also provide some excellent source material for comparison, perhaps even alluding to an evolution of human thought culminating in Cosmodeism which would add to Cosmodeism’s allure as a belief system. I noticed, however, the absence of a discussion of Cosmism in the book which I think would have given more historical context to Cosmodeism. This was a missed opportunity for comparison in my opinion between space religions. In particular, I would be interested if Bisk explained to what degree he views Fyodorov’s Common Task to correspond with Nesyahu’s Cosmodeistic Hypothesis. This type of ‘inter-Astronist’ comparison (i.e., comparison between space religions) would be useful for those interested in the interplay of beliefs of religions espousing some form of transcension, especially if this led to a critical examination of whether my assumption that transcension is the common thread linking Cosmism, Cosmodeism and Astronism is accurate from a Cosmodeist’s perspective.

Overall, Bisk's work is an essential contribution to the field of Astronist studies not only because it provides an extensive discussion of Cosmodeism, but also because it clarifies the writings of Nesyahu himself from someone close to him while he was alive. Due to this, we can be assured that Bisk's presentation of Nesyahu's hypothesis is accurate to how he intended his writings to be interpreted. It is important, however, that Bisk provides his own additions and developments in the form of Cosmodeism to Nesyahu's original hypothesis in this work which are equally valid and valuable. The question this work also raises, however, is the following: what is the future of Cosmodeism? This question goes unanswered by Bisk as part of his broader silence over the organisation of Cosmodeism. In many ways, this work by Bisk lends the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis as a gift to the world to be developed by contemporary and future philosophers. This raises an opportunity for theoretical expansion but also highlights several omissions of this work: the unanswered question of what specifically makes someone a Cosmodeist, the ideal structure of organised Cosmodeism and a glossary of Cosmodeist terms which would have been useful. In light of these omissions, I suspect Bisk's priority is not to organise Cosmodeism. But if not then, I must ask him: what is the actual purpose of Cosmodeism?

As an Astronist reading this book, my main criticism of Bisk is his perceived aversion to organising Cosmodeism either as a religion or a philosophy. For humanity to execute the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis, a grand plan will no doubt be required which Bisk begins to develop in this work through his discussion of the practical steps humanity ought to take to tackle environmental issues and human growth. However, far less attention is placed on developing Cosmodeism's eschatology and soteriology which need some expansion to make Cosmodeism a well-rounded belief system. Moreover, I have lingering questions about the specific role of humanity in the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis: what ought human beings to do to ensure they do not miss out on ascending to *Homo divinitas*?; is there a specific window of time we have to execute the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis?; what if we miss this deadline?; does Cosmodeism encourage setting up institutions to guide humanity's execution of the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis?

Lastly, I was disappointed to find less emphasis in Bisk's writings on space exploration and outer space as the essential setting where the Cosmodeistic Hypothesis ought to be executed. Moreover, how Bisk conveys the process of how cosmic evolution will lead to human beings becoming Gods turns increasingly vague as his writings address topics further and further from Earth. For example, the goal of Astronism is transcosmisation—the act of human beings becoming evolved enough

to physically leave the limited cosmos and enter the infinite universe—but the absence of such a specific far-future end goal in Cosmodeism may leave readers at an abrupt terminus. Having said this, Bisk’s work is certainly welcomed and ought to be looked upon as a creed of Cosmodeism and as an essential addition to the library of anyone remotely interested in the interplay between evolution and theology.