



Cosmism: A New Hope for Humanity

Yoda Oraiah

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Cosmism is a broad, reasoned guide through a spiritual perspective that encourages human expansion.

Yoda Oraiah's ambitious spiritual guidebook *Cosmism* introduces an inclusive theology that's shaped by science, religion, and the arts.

Adopting a pantheistic religious model in which God is everything and consciousness is everywhere, the book tackles broad theological questions about the nature of existence, about the cosmos, and about the afterlife. It seeks to provide answers that are backed by modern science, and it makes frequent appeals to the work of Carl Sagan.

Bookended by explorations of God, the book's seven parts are devoted to concepts like the brother and sister tenets, sexuality, humanity, angels, and animals. Throughout these parts, the book aims to cover all aspects of God as a concept. However, it ends up obscuring its basic tenets amid its thick explorations.

The book draws on the tales of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism in its queries, while also incorporating lessons from neuroscience, physics, and literature. It disagrees with long-held beliefs in the religions it draws upon, too: for example, it declares that "though Jesus was the second Moses, the original Moses was more spectacular," and delivers forty-seven scriptural references to support this perspective. Still, in trying to appeal to all people via such wide sourcing, it ends up feeling less accessible to those who aren't fluent in its referenced philosophies to begin with.

With the belief that it is critical to realize the essential spiritual connectedness of human beings with the world around them, and to correct social inclinations toward false sources of fulfillment, this high-aiming book seeks to deliver hopeful messages, such as that "the godly understand the language of Nature and do not get overwhelmed by personal and world events." It asserts that "there is a universal intelligence & ultimate consciousness behind all events." Still, though the book is most focused on delivering a creed of existence, its call for others to accept its perspective is disconnected. In the end, there's little sense that its concepts can be practically applied in people's lives.

The book further limits its audience through its bravado and its turns toward the prophetic. Its tone is self-aggrandizing, if rhythmic:

I am merely a distillate-drinkin', wife-whackin', ignoble 'Indian' man and an irksome immigrant fella, while you folks are the innately immaculate, entirely enlightened Elysian elves. But I am also tall, dark, broad-shouldered, and handsome with a rich hair texture. ... I am the most eligible candidate to become the next king or president.

These bursts of authorial self-recommendation undermine the neutrality and integrity of the book's arguments.

Still, *Cosmism* is a broad, reasoned guide through a spiritual perspective that encourages human expansion.

SAMANTHA ANN EHLE (July 25, 2022)

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