

## From “Agency: A force for Evolution” to “Unmasking the Domination System”

At our last meeting on January 22, Art Klipfel and Grady McGonagill presented two worldviews on agency in evolution.

- Art stated that [consciousness], which is the agency in evolution, provides purpose, meaning and directionality that we are challenged to discern and follow in our social, cultural and political lives.
- Grady countered that complex adaptive organisms could have evolved from matter without being guided by any inherent intelligence or spirit.

I added that there are at least four different worldviews as outlined by David Korten.<sup>1</sup> Each of the four contrasting cosmologies convey a very different understanding of relationships, agency, and meaning.

1. **Distant Patriarch:** My most important relationship is to a distant God who is the source of all agency and meaning (**Standard Christian dogma**)
2. **Grand Machine:** I exist in a mechanistically interconnected cosmos devoid of agency and possessing no purpose or meaning. (**More or less Grady’s position—need to add role of nature**)
3. **Mystical Unity:** Relationships, agency, and meaning are all artifacts of the illusion of separation created by ego: I am one with the timeless eternal One. (**The Buddhist position**)
4. **Living Universe:** I am an intelligent, self-directing participant in a conscious, interconnected self-organizing cosmos on a journey of self-discovery toward ever greater complexity, beauty, awareness, and possibility. (**Art’s thesis**)

There was some agreement that view #4 was the New Story worldview.

Upon reading Walter Wink<sup>2</sup> a fifth worldview emerges that is antithetical to all the above. This is the spirituality of domination. The domination system has a mythology based on redemptive violence, which is portrayed as the victory of order over chaos. It is a system of control through violence, fear of death, and propagating the domination worldview. This cult of violence is still very much with us today. It is the spirituality of militarism. Once you are aware of it, you can see it everywhere in popular culture. The myth of redemptive violence offers salvation through identification with the winner. So winning is everything, and might makes right.

My question: Why spend time debating worldviews 1-4, when there is a monster in the room?

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<sup>1</sup> David Korten *Change the Story, Change the Future: A Living Economy for a Living Earth* page 60, “Different Cosmologies, Different Worldview.”

<sup>2</sup> Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and resistance in a World of Domination*. Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1992