

## Chp 2 The Domination System

*The Domination System includes both winners and a lot of losers*

“... huge institutions and bureaucracies that [concentrate] power over the day-to-day lives of ordinary people.” p38

*These Powers began to be consciously identified between 330 BCE – 30 BCE*

*Overarching network of Powers* “...characterized by unjust economic relations, oppressive political relations, biased race relations, patriarchal gender relations, hierarchical power relations, and the use of violence to maintain them all.” p39

*Since 3000 BCE and the rise of conquest states..* “As warfare became the central preoccupation of states, taxation became necessary in order to support a standing army, a warrior caste, and an aristocracy.” “Social systems became rigidly hierarchical, authoritarian, and patriarchal.” p40

“Defense against a powerful aggressor required a society to become more like the society that threatened it.” p41

Can you agree that with tribal/familial organization there was no bureaucracy or warrior caste?

### *MYTH OF REDEMPTIVE VIOLENCE*

*The myth that supports the Domination system is the Myth of Redemptive Violence* “... violence saves...war brings peace... might makes right.” (p42) “...victory of order over chaos by means of violence.” p48

*Doesn't seem to be mythic.* “Violence simply appears to be the nature of things. It's what works. It seems inevitable... If a god is where you turn when all else fails, violence certainly functions as a god.” p42

Myth is transmitted in stories, literature, dramatic entertainment, children's cartoons. Babylonian creation myth “one of the oldest continually enacted myths in the world.”

Babylonian creation myth: Marduk slays and dismembers chaos dragon and makes cosmos of her body and blood.

“...order is established by means of disorder.” “Evil precedes good. The gods themselves are violent.” p45

*Similar creation myths in Syria, Phoenicia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Germany, Ireland, India, China*

“Cosmic order requires the violent suppression of the feminine, and it is mirrored in the social order by the subjection of women to men and people to ruler.” “...human beings are created from the blood of a murdered god. Our very origin is violence.” p46

“Human beings are thus naturally incapable of peaceful coexistence. Order must continually be imposed on us from on high...” p47

In contrast is the Biblical creation

Biblical myth: “...a good God...creates a good creation. Chaos does not resist order. Good is prior to evil. Neither evil nor violence is a part of creation, but enter later, as the result of the first couple's sin...” p46

Very interesting that this myth is written during the time of captivity in Babylon... Israel having lost to violence.

I had no appreciation of what a radical idea it was, for creation to be good. How refreshing to have a God who loves and seeks the restoration of our relationship.

“The psychodynamics of the TV cartoon or comic book are marvelously simple: children identify with the good guy so that they can think of themselves as good. This enables them to project onto the bad guy their own repressed anger, violence, rebelliousness, or lust, and then vicariously to enjoy their own evil by watching the bad guy initially prevail. ... When the good guy finally wins, viewers are then able to reassert control over their own inner tendencies, repress them, and reestablish a sense of goodness without coming to any insight about their own inner evil.” p49

I could relate to this, how about you?

*Western: settled by shootouts as the process of law is ineffective. Distrust of democratic processes*

*Jaws: exactly the Marduk myth embodiment of evil/chaos, wind down throat (oxygen tank) then cutting open*

*Spy thriller: again solve the problem by moving outside the constraints of democracy and morality (Oli North)*

*Get Smart: CONTROL vs KAOS (Marduk) “You have to murder ,kill, destroy to preserve what is good.”*

“By making violence pleasurable, fascinating and entertaining, the Powers are able to delude people into compliance with a system that is cheating them of their very lives.” “Once children have been indoctrinated into the ... dominator society, they may never outgrow the need to locate all evil outside themselves. Even as adults they tend to scapegoat others ... for all that is wrong in the world. They continue to depend on group identification and the upholding of social norms for a sense of well-being.” p53

- Can you agree with any or all of this? How do children behave when they have not ‘been indoctrinated into the dominator society?

“...the survival and welfare of the nation becomes the highest earthly and heavenly good. ... a Power is made absolute. ... [the myth of Redemptive Violence] establish[es] a patriotic religion at the heart of the state, it gives divine sanction to that nation’s imperialism. The myth of redemptive violence thus serves as the spirituality of militarism.” p56

*The survival of the nation is supreme.* “ [Myth of redemptive violence and national supremacy] provides divine legitimation for the suppression of poor people everywhere, and the extraction of wealth for the poor nations.” p57  
“Salvation through identification... with the hero-leader. Right or wrong scarcely enter the picture. Everything depends on victory... ownership of one’s own evil and acknowledgement of God in the enemy – is for many simply too alien a concept.” p60

- Pretty strong statements. What do you think? If you disagree, are there pieces that you can agree with?  
 When we say that we cannot ‘welcome the stranger’ because it is not in the interest of our national survival, is that an example?

“From the perspective of national security, salvation comes, not by insight, repentance and truth, but by identification with ... military might.” p61

“The myth of redemptive violence is ... nationalism become absolute. This myth speaks *for* God; it does not listen for God to speak. ... It does not seek God in order to change; it embraces God in order to prevent change. Its metaphor is not the journey but the fortress. Its offer is not forgiveness but victory. Its good news is not the unconditional love of enemies but their final elimination.” p61

And as our defensive hackles rise, Wink asserts...

“I love my country passionately; that is why I want to see it do right. ... true patriotism acknowledges God’s sovereignty of all the nations... There is a divine vocation for the United States (and every other nation) to perform in human affairs.” p62

Rather than ‘America, love it or leave it’, ‘America, love it into being its best self’

Next week

“Jesus’ gospel is the most powerful antidote to the myth of redemptive violence that the world has ever known.” p62