

A "working model" is a scaled-down version of something big you intend to make or do. One sits on a chimney projection in our loft. It's the model made to help us visualize and redesign our house....Lives private and public, societies and civilizations, are lived on working models called "myths" or "paradigms." Prophets prophecy from vision-models, from which also artists create. Poets and other musicians work in and through sound-models, vintners make their decisions within taste-smell-models, scientific research proceeds by putting forward models called "hypotheses." Part of the fascination of Rubik's Cube is that, in a small area you can control (in a world in which you feel so little is under your control!), you can exercise your problem-solving, puzzle-unraveling skill and get feedback swiftly, so that if your solution-model fails you can move rapidly--heuristically, exploratively--to another solution-model....How's this related to Cronkite's "And that's the way it is"? He became "the most trusted man in America" because he worked perfectly and honorably within the going American eco-political paradigm, as do shamans in traditional societies. Which brings us to the chief point of this thinksheet: God has given us humans both the power to live models and the power to critique and even replace them. And I am, in semi-retirement, concerned about my faithfulness to God in the past vis-a-vis models (their accuracy and adequacy) and about my present and future responsibilities vis-a-vis models. For a starter, here are some analytic/salvific categories:

#### COSMIC A/S CATEGORIES

The one fundamental opposition here is to use, or not to use, human consciousness as model: is C:X=W:M? (Is the cosmos in a relationship to a comprehensive Consciousness the same as, or similar to, or at least best perceived as similar to, the relationship I ["M" is "me"] have to my/the world?) More than does any other literary classic in the world, the Bible says YES! Homer fudges between Zeus and Moira (Fate, which works impersonally in both senses--i.e., without personal consciousness, and on persons facelessly, impartially). Darwin finally comes down on the side of NO, as do the other two shapers of "modern" consciousness, viz. Marx and Freud. What an appalling stupidity to say that if only evolution is taught as "science" in the public school, religion is not being taught! Creator-less creation! Not the West's, but the other option! The Darwin model is self-analytic, self-salvific: no god but us, no savior but ourselves and perhaps (nature being uncaring) no savior at all. The psychosocial consequences of this (e.g., Pentagon budget) are horrendous. And efforts to emerge Person thinking (trust) and process thinking (control) are less than promising in the public sphere (though I love Whitehead-Hartshorne-Wieman).

#### HUMAN-CONDITION A/S CATEGORIES

Control question: To what extent, if any, are human beings complicitous in what we experience as untowardnesses? Otherwise put, are "evil" and "sin" related (cosmically?historically?personally?societally?)? YES, says the Bible (Judaism and Christianity), whose A/S category is sin/salvation, fall/redemption, betrayal/forgiveness. MAYBE, says Homer, the Greeks in general, and traditional societies. For the Greeks, while evil-sin is a minor theme, the major is apotheosis (divinization [only once in NT: "participate in the divine nature," 2P.1.4]). NO, says modernity: "nature" is unconscious-uncaring about us, and we grub our way toward the grave cravenly or nobly, in either case as victims in an essentially impersonal cosmos with fundamentally flawed-distorting traditions ("history"). Individualist/collectivist versions amount to the same dismal conclusion, with the latter recently dominant (Hegel-Marx-Chicago U. [Dewey-Mead-Lasswell-Case] + Columbia U. [Dewey-Boaz-Benedict et al]). Existentialist versions of the former (i.e., individualism) emphasized the human condition as mortal and decisional and were more apt to be pessimistic than optimistic.

#### SOCIETAL-CONDITION A/S CATEGORIES

The most influential standoff has been between savagery/civilization (the socio-myth of earth-taming) and oppression/liberation (the socio-myth of tyranny/freedom ["liberalism"] or exploitation/revolution ["justice" or "socialism" or "communism"]). I grew up in the former, lived my middle years in the latter, and feel myself emerging into a synthesis of the two.\*