

**The Frontier of Changing Worldviews:
Mapping the Complexity of Worldview for Gospel Engagement**

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As the number of unreached people groups has slowly decreased, it would seem that new frontiers of the "unreached" would have decreased as well. Perhaps this is true in a broad sense, but as the forces of globalism and tribalism plow in opposite directions, the soil beneath the religious labels held by peoples of the world continue to shift. The result, I believe, is an ever-changing frontier illustrated by emerging worldviews that differ from previous generations. This constant shift presents a sort of "whack-a-mole" challenge among the peoples of the world. In *Soul, Self, and Society*, Michael Rynkiewich addressed the phenomena of transnationalism, migration, and diaspora, noting the shifting identities of peoples on the move. "In some ways," he writes, "this is the frontier of mission because it involves populations that are difficult to identify, difficult to settle among, and difficult to minister among" (Rynkiewich, 2010, p. 213). I agree with this, but I am additionally suggesting that the shifting worldviews among generations present a similar challenge even if they never move.

While it is true that some worldviews are made up of a "mix" of an official religion a person's actual beliefs, this information alone is not always a helpful insight toward engaging them with the gospel. It would be more useful for us to understand what exactly is in this mix. Even more helpful would be the capability to visualize this in a way that is comprehensive enough to deal with the complexity of someone's worldview and identity, but simple enough to be of use for the purpose of evangelism.

In this paper, I will explain the reality of changing worldviews as a frontier of missiology and offer a worldview mapping model that I believe accomplishes the goal above. To illustrate this ever-changing frontier, I will explore the reality of "generational discontinuity" between parents and their children in global cities. Specifically, I will use examples of youth and adults in Malaysia, which will both clarify the worldview frontiers and demonstrate the usefulness of the proposed worldview mapping model.

LABELS AND REALITIES

When I moved to Malaysia, I was prepared to encounter multiple religions and the confluence of what is typically referred to as "westernism" in the lives of young people. One of the starkest examples of a culture within a culture was easily identified among Chinese Malaysians. For those who spoke Chinese as a first language, they normally looked culturally Chinese in their behavior and view of reality. Among those who spoke English as a first language, many of them would refer to themselves jokingly as "bananas." When Americans

who hadn't heard this term cocked their heads in curiosity, they would explain - "yellow on the outside, white on the inside" - and laugh as the foreigners nervously tried to figure out how to respond. What they meant by this is that their behavior, taste in entertainment, and general ways of thinking about life had been shaped in a way that made them feel more similar to westerners than their own culture.

While this is a common way of understanding what is happening globally, I don't believe it's ultimately helpful to write off such significant shifts as simply the spread of the "western worldview." For example, basketball began with James Naismith in Canada, but no one talks about it as "the Canadian sport of basketball" since it outgrew the northern border a very long time ago. In a similar way, we should also stop talking about shopping malls as if they are uniquely western. If you wonder why I would say that, you probably haven't spent much time in large Asian cities. I currently live in Birmingham, Alabama, which has almost a million people included in its metropolitan area. We have one functioning indoor shopping mall. The city where I lived in Southeast Asia has eight million people and well over two hundred shopping malls, about a dozen of which are at least six times the size of The Galleria in Birmingham. So when we speak of indoor malls as being indigenous to the West but not to the East, we make the word "indigenous" irrelevant. Regardless of where they started, they are certainly flourishing in other parts of the world and they have become part of their cultural identity as well.

The same is true for worldview assumptions. If a young woman in Indonesia sees the world around her primarily in terms of material realities, it's patronizing to label her as "western" as if she is simply the product of external forces beyond her control or that she has been "brainwashed" by foreigners. Instead, we should take her seriously as someone who has examined both the claims of science and the claims of the cultural Islam around her and chosen which she actually believes, even if she still claims the label of "Muslim." Any effort to share the gospel with her must engage her modern worldview, not just the claims of Islam.

For the last seven years, students in my Introduction to Christian Missions class have had the assignment to meet with someone from another religion who moved to the United States after their sixteenth birthday to ask questions about their culture and beliefs. While determining someone's worldview is complicated, there are a handful of questions that get to the heart of it more than others:

- Where do humans come from? How did the world come to exist?
- Why are there so many problems in the world? What is the *main* problem in the world?
- Are there any solutions? How do we fix what is broken?
- How are we to live with purpose?
- Is there more to this world than what we can see? (Demons, angels, ghosts, etc.)
- How do we think of the future? What happens when we die?

These are the questions that have the most potential to either confirm an individual's adherence to their religious label or reveal stark inconsistencies. My students ask them toward the end of the interview and have a follow-up assignment to evaluate how well a person's actual answers match up with their religion. Below I will illustrate the levels of consistency among the interviewees by class sections. When the interviewee answers one of these questions in a way that does not match their stated religion, they will be considered "inconsistent." When they answer two or more that do not match their religion, they will be considered "significantly inconsistent." I try to err on the side of being generous with affirming a "consistent" answer when it is ambiguous.¹ Below are the results of four class interview assignments.

In January of 2021, three interviews were consistent, three were inconsistent, and six were significantly inconsistent. In Spring of 2021, three were consistent, two were inconsistent, and one was significantly inconsistent. In January of 2022, six were consistent, four were inconsistent, and three were significantly inconsistent. Finally, in January of 2024, two were consistent, none were inconsistent, and five were significantly inconsistent. Consider the following examples of inconsistencies.

When an Iraqi woman was asked where humans came from, she affirmed that she believed in the Big Bang theory. "I think that there is a power out there, but I'm not sure if Allah is God. I believe there is a higher power, but I was taught by my parents that manners come before religion. Therefore, treating others well comes before belief." When asked about the main problem with the world, she responded, "People are not willing to see how others believe. They are biased in their way of thinking. This issue of not being willing to see something from another's perspective is worse in politics and religion." Her answers, which do not include anything about the Qu'ran, deviate significantly from what someone would expect from a devout Muslim.

Other responses were similarly striking. A Hindu young man insisted that humanity's main problem is that we often do not consider others equal, completely sidestepping any questions about karma, reincarnation, and the caste system. A Muslim of Turkish descent not only expressed belief in Evolution, but further insisted that faith in human reason as the solution for mankind is the way to move forward. Lastly, a Muslim from Iran said that "nothing really happens when you die."

For those who have experience in cross-cultural relationships, the results of the ethnographic interviews are not shocking. If I had believed that my students would experience great consistency in the answers, I would not have had them ask the questions. Instead, I would

¹I allow students to interview people from other countries who are atheists, such as China, since the modern worldview can be coherently discerned in these questions. While there are sometimes inconsistencies in their answers as well, I'm not including their questionnaires since the point of this section is to show the relative consistency or inconsistency in an officially stated religion.

have simply told them what people from each religion believed. When students share their interviews at the end of the Introduction to Christian Missions course, I know that I have achieved the goal of convincing my students that people from other religions can be just as unpredictable as the cultural Christians around us. As I prepared to teach a course on world religions for the first time, however, I knew that I needed something more than to simply point out that religious adherents are unpredictable. The result was the worldview mapping tool.

There are three primary ideas behind the tool. The first is the theory that most people have a “heart worldview” in a similar way multilingualists have a first language, or “heart language.” It is their *default set of beliefs which they use to make sense of the world around them whenever possible*. When encountering a new truth or circumstance which is not explained adequately by the heart worldview, however, most people will then pull from a different - sometimes even contradictory - set of beliefs to ease the cognitive dissonance. When it comes to sharing the message of Christ, the heart worldview is the first set of beliefs the evangelist should consider as they lovingly and patiently engage them with truth.

The second idea is that there are worldviews which are relatively new to history and have made their home in the hearts and minds of people around the world. Subsequently, they have become the *antagonists* to the traditional religions and worldviews that have existed for hundreds or thousands of years. For example, when the young Muslim from Iraq expressed the idea that the main problem with the world is that people are biased and unwilling to learn from other religions, we can see that her heart worldview is likely postmodernism, which has won the victory in her heart over the imams who taught her the Qu’ran. The young Turkish man who affirmed Evolution and faith in human reason as the way for humans to progress has revealed that his heart lies with the major assumptions behind modernism. There are many worldviews that could be included in the model. For the sake of simplicity, I am limiting it to monotheism, polytheism, animism, and pantheism as the *traditional worldviews*. The *new global worldviews* are limited to modernism and postmodernism.² “Westernism” is intentionally avoided for reasons already explained. “Secularism” is also avoided because it is too broad, though I acknowledge that both modernism and postmodernism overlap with this term.

The third idea behind the worldview mapping tool is that anyone sharing the gospel with someone whose heart does not seem to match their religious label should not assume that you can then completely ignore the label. While it’s true that their heart should be engaged first, the religious label usually represents the world that will produce the most persecution should they convert to Christianity. We will refer to this as the “costly” worldview. Regardless of whether or not the young woman from Iraq ever reads the Qu’ran or attends a mosque, conversion to Christianity could mean rejection from family and friends, the loss of job

² The three dimensions of the gospel, a la Jayson Georges, could easily be employed on the model as well. For simplicity, I am not including this in the paper. Additionally, an understanding of the traditional worldviews will be assumed.

prospects, and even physical persecution. Should she begin to question her postmodernist assumptions that all religions are the same, see her need to repent of sin and know God, and be attracted to Jesus, she will likely re-examine Islam just to make sure she's not doing anything rash and unnecessary. Even if she doesn't reconsider Islam for herself, she will want to know if there are answers to the objections to Christianity that would have to answer should she place her faith in Christ. Given the fact that the costly worldview will almost invariably be intertwined with ethnicity and/or national identity, the wise evangelist will be ready to engage both worldviews.

MODERNISM AND GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE

The global spread of the modernist worldview and the eventual emergence of what some call "global youth culture" are mostly the same conversation. Many discussions on the global youth culture tend to focus on media, entertainment, and marketing, but these developments would not have the same impact if the industrial revolution had not created the opportunity and necessity for extended education. Before secondary education became mandatory, the large majority of children finished school, if they went to school at all, and transitioned into their full-time work not long after puberty. Most would have already been trained in a family business (farming, shop owner, etc.) and married long before their twentieth birthday. In their world, there was little opportunity for young people to become enveloped in the trappings of today's youth culture when they're already busy working full-time and raising a family. In a relatively short period of time, society recognized they have transitioned from children to adults. The path to adulthood in today's modern societies, however, is anything but clear and this has been the case for decades. Mortimer and Larson, editors of the 2002 work, *The Changing Adolescent Experience*, explain,

The proportions of youth obtaining college and postgraduate degrees have been increasing over many decades, with no end in sight... Fewer young people are becoming adults in what might be considered a traditional, normatively prescribed sequence of events, that is, leaving home and finishing their educations, acquiring full-time jobs, marrying, and having children... The growth of cohabitation is accompanied by a more frequent decoupling of marriage and childbearing... As young people go to school and postpone entry to adult roles for longer periods, up to and sometimes beyond the third decade of life, their experiences may become inconsistent, their age status blurred (Mortimer and Larson 2002, 10-11).

After the invention of the new stage in between childhood and adulthood became normalized, businesses seized the opportunity to provide the media and entertainment that they suddenly had the time to consume. This new reality, of course, had a massive impact on the collective worldview of young people globally.

It would be a mistake to think of the global movement toward extended mandatory education across the world simply as something that simply filled their time and prepared them for the future. Instead, we need to understand that, as secondary schools and universities spread throughout the cities of the world, they were decidedly western in how the developing sciences were taught.³ They also became the conduit of what Paul Hiebert called the “first truly global culture” – modernism (Hiebert 2008, 2). From this point on, it could no longer be assumed that a young person who had completed a secondary or tertiary education saw the world in the same way as their parents. Thus, the hidden shifts of culture and ways of thinking created a new kind of frontier for missions.

There’s no shortage of books and articles that examine the latest behaviors and products associated with youth culture fads around the world. This approach to understanding youth, however, will always tend to miss the forest for the trees unless we first understand two larger ideas. First, we need a basic understanding of how youth culture emerged across our global cities in the first place, as we have already begun to explore above. Second, *we need to be able to visualize the reality that they are a unique mix of competing and conflicting worldviews*. The influences come both from their parents’ culture and outside influences as well. This means that they are not just generationally distinct from their parents. They are sometimes culturally distinct, possessing their own unique worldview.

As western education spread globally, a new way of seeing the world traveled along with it. In the emerging universities, “the new paradigm... included a focus on understanding the material world through systematic investigation and the use of systematic abstract logic, and faith in human reason” (Ibid., 141).

To illustrate the sudden differences, imagine how people from very different worldviews would plan for a two-day journey. The animist from a remote tribe in sub-Saharan Africa may place the primary emphasis on conducting the proper sacrifices to the spirits who would otherwise become antagonistic to their plans to leave the village. The devout monotheist would pray for God’s protection. Their children, if educated in a modern university, would be likely to place the emphasis on material resources, mapping out the path, and preparing for contingencies. If the spirits or a god are in the picture at all, they are secondary and relegated to a separate sphere of life that was suddenly called “religion.”

This, of course, eventually had vast implications for other areas of life as well. “Religion was relegated to the private sphere of life and seen as imagination, and God ceased to be relevant to public life. A rigidly materialistic, atheistic philosophy of history emerged that reduced the spirit to matter and morals to social constructs” (Ibid., 142). While Hiebert is talking here specifically of how things played out in the West, the same ideas played out in the universities of the world. This is not to say that most young people suddenly became ardent atheists, but

³ At this point in time, “Western” was appropriate in describing a distinct worldview since it was not yet globally accepted.

that the way the sciences were taught gave them a language which, for many, became a default mode when it came to approaching both everyday issues and the big questions of life as well.

Hiebert explains that the introduction of a Greek dualistic way of viewing the world “separated reality into two largely unrelated realms: supernatural and natural. On the one hand, there is the spiritual realm in which God and other beings live and act. This is the world of religion. On the other hand, there is the natural realm - the material world of science” (Ibid., 144). In other words, the modern worldview didn’t normally make someone leave their religion. It compartmentalized it into another sphere of life. After all, a scientific worldview by itself left some obvious gaps. “Stripped to its minimum, a scientific worldview consists strictly of falsifiable components,” writes biology professor, Matthew Orr. He elaborates that “science is limited, and ethics, which compose an inevitable part of any useful worldview, are largely unfalsifiable. Thus, a worldview that acts only on scientific components is crippled by a lack of moral relevance” (Orr 2006, 435).

Even though there was a general recognition of the moral limits of a purely scientific worldview, by the time radically different lifestyles emerged through television screens, youth in our global cities had already been prepared to question the moral foundations to cultural commitments such as marriage, family, and sex in general. In addition to changing views of personal morality, the ideals of human rights and democracy were popularized as well. Modernism is many things, of course.

As we progressed into the late twentieth century, the youth of the world were growing up as the first generations to be shaped by the forces of globalism. Mass migration to the cities, usually in search of education and jobs, opened up a new world for the young, many of whom were now more influenced by their peers than their own families. As technology developed at a blindingly rapid pace, they adapted to environments that were radically different than the communities in which their parents were formed. This is the essence of what can be called a “generational discontinuity” (Jones and Dean 2006, 263).⁴

A century ago, most parents could say, “when I was your age” as a segue into how to handle most of the problems a child would encounter. But an African father can’t say, “when I was your age” to illustrate to his son exactly how to handle online bullying through social media. Neither can an Asian mother say, “when I was your age” to help her daughter conquer her struggle with bulimia when she had never even heard of it when she was a teenager.⁵ Luke Greenwood explains.

⁴ Tony Jones and Kendra Creasy Dean further explain “generational discontinuity” as follows: “As adolescents develop self-identity, they do so in relation to their parents, but this is problematized in times of rapid social and technological change which imbues young people with a vastly different set of cultural assumptions than those of their parents.”

⁵ I first taught Youth Culture in Penang, Malaysia in 2005. My students had not heard of bulimia happening locally at that time. Only weeks after the class, the first cases became public and it wasn’t long until it was common knowledge in the country that this was a problem.

For the majority of history, culture originated and developed in the context of family and tradition. But the current information era with its ever-advancing technology and communications have drastically changed the way our stories, art, and customs are shared. We used to learn about life by asking our parents and reading books. Now we turn to YouTubers like PewDiePie and Casey Neistat to tell us what to think about life, what to do with our time, what products to buy, and even how to vote. (Greenwood 2019, 43).

GLOBAL POSTMODERNISM

The modern world, spread through colonialism and reinforced throughout the Cold War, usually suffered no pangs of conscience when telling someone from another culture they were wrong. Whether the topic was science, religion, or other, it was assumed by most that a conversation about which way was true or false, legitimate or illegitimate, good or best, was an appropriate way to further the progress we were certain was being accomplished. The post-colonial world, however, rejected the philosophical certainties behind everything from which religion is best to the motives that underpinned which scientific research would be conducted or promoted. There is no objective truth, they would say, just interpretations. “I think, therefore I am” was replaced by “I feel, therefore I am.”

Today, postmodern ideas and thoughts permeate the globe, albeit at various levels. Wang Ning, author of *After Postmodernism*, writes,

Scholars from East and West have come to agree that postmodernism is no longer a phenomenon limited to Western post-industrial society, for it has long gone beyond the limitation of historical periodization and generated metamorphosed versions of itself in under-developed and developing Oriental and Third World countries, including China” (Ning 2023, 3).

Postmodern ideas not only spread globally, but they often helped local philosophers and culture makers around the world combat the cultural imperialism of the Modern West. Ning asserts that “the critical and creative reception of postmodernism in China and other Oriental and Third World countries is closely related to the decolonizing efforts made by the people in their struggle against the neo-colonialist penetration, both in politics and culture” (Ibid., 5). While Ning at one point acknowledges postmodernism as the “new dominant cultural paradigm,” this doesn’t mean that it has thrown out all of the traditional worldviews (Ibid., 237). Rather, it explains what he calls “neo-Confucianism” as a tool used in their version of the ever-waging wars of tribalism versus globalism.

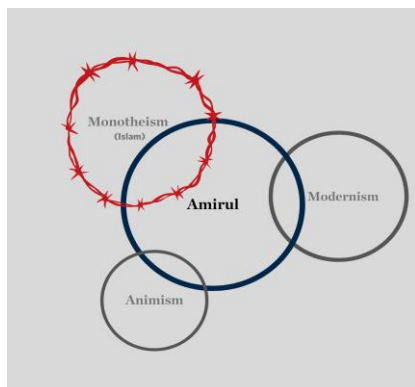
WORLDVIEW MAPPING TOOL

Now that we have seen how modernism and postmodernism have become both global worldviews, we are ready to employ the worldview mapping tool. In order to illustrate the

continually developing worldview frontiers, we will examine the differences between fictional Malaysian parents and their children.⁶

A Malay Man and His Son: Amirul and Mohd

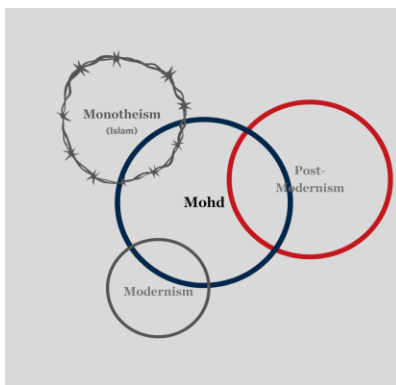
Amirul grew up in Kuala Lumpur in the eighties when modern education had taken hold, but the most visible fruits of modernism, such as the Petronas Towers, were still a decade away. He went to mosque every Friday and joined his family in their participation of Ramadan. He was born just as Malaysia claimed its independence from Great Britain and loved celebrating the annual Merdeka (Freedom) Day celebrations in August. While most of his beliefs about the supernatural seem to flow from the Qu'ran, he has a healthy respect for what to do and what not to do during Hungry Ghost month in order to prevent aggravating the spirits who have been temporarily released from Hell to roam the earth. He has two wives, four daughters, and two sons. Amirul enjoys riding his motor bike, going to the mall, and horror movies.



We can see that even Amirul, the father, is also a mix of worldviews, as depicted in the diagram to the left. Amirul's heart worldview, depicted with the red circle, is monotheism - specifically, Islam. The next in line, and subordinate to monotheism, is modernism. His preference for a form of democracy and his enjoyment of modern entertainment are important, but Islamic rules and beliefs are ultimate. The raised hair on the back of his neck during Hungry Ghost month reveals a significant level of animism as well. The

barbed wire represents the *costly worldview*, which will be explained below.

Like Amirul, his son, Mohd, also grew up going to the mosque. Mohd also identifies as a Muslim, and deep down he does, in fact, believe in one God. Unlike his father, however, his



heart worldview is not monotheism. Instead, it's postmodernism. While he does believe in a general right and wrong, he has become distrustful of how religion in his country controls the individual choices of its citizens. What is more, he has come to the conclusion that what's really wrong with the world is that people judge each other based on religion, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender. He longs for a better world in which such judgment does not exist and is active on social media advocating for this future. He is thirty-four,

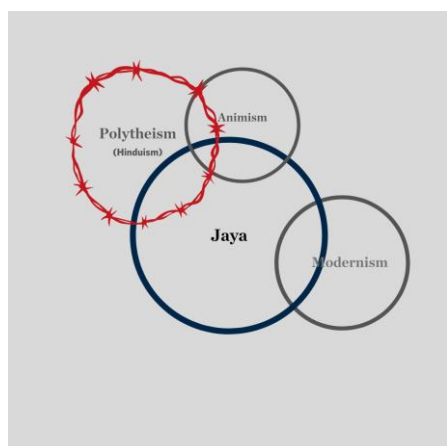
⁶ Although these are fictitious scenarios, I led the Centre for Youth Ministry at Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary from 2005 to 2012 and have insight into the various cultures and generations in Malaysia. This helps me to imagine culturally accurate scenarios.

single, and has no plans to get married. He spends his time with friends, either in person or social media, going to the mall, heavy metal, and partying in clubs while trying not to be seen by the wrong person.

Anyone who would aim to share the gospel with Mohd would be wise to take seriously his postmodern objections to religion and his passion for equality. His heart worldview must be engaged. However, it would be a mistake to assume that this is the only obstacle for evangelism. Although monotheistic Islam is not where his heart lies, this is where he would face the greatest external consequences if he decided to follow Christ. His family would reject him. His government has made it illegal to convert and he would most likely lose his job. This reality is illustrated by the *barbed wire* in the diagram – the costly worldview. It’s one thing to pull a wire out of your body. It’s something altogether different to pull out barbed wire. If his heart language of postmodernism genuinely changes, it would not cost him as much in an external sense. Monotheistic Islam, however, cannot be taken away without great consequences. Therefore, any attempts at evangelism cannot completely avoid engaging Islam even if it isn’t his heart language. Amirul would need to be utterly convinced that Jesus is God in flesh and that Islam is wrong about this before he would even think about being baptized. Even if he is not attracted to Islam, he would have a great interest in knowing if there are good answers to Islamic objections to Christianity.

An Indian-Malaysian Woman and Daughter: Jaya and Dunushi

Jaya was born to Indian parents who immigrated to Malaysia just before the country gained its independence from Great Britain. She was a teenager during the late eighties and early nineties, seeing a great deal of change in terms of Malaysia’s entrance into the modern world.

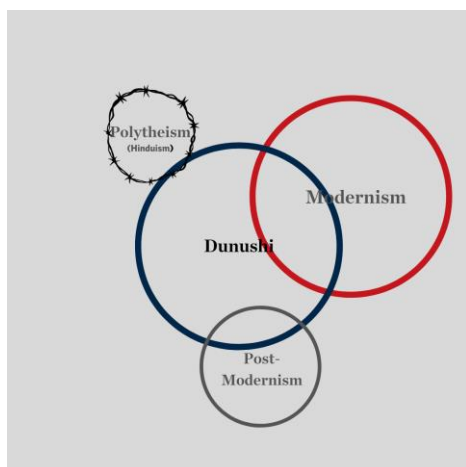


Many of the tall buildings around her were built with the cheap labor provided by her local community. She is a devotee of Lord Murugan, whose enormous statue towers over the Batu Caves, which serves as both a global tourist attraction and the center for the massive annual Thaipusam celebration for Hindus around the world. Her husband has consistently been in and out of work and struggles with an alcohol addiction. She leans heavily on her faith in the midst of financial instability, going to the local temple regularly to offer sacrifices to Lord Murugan and a couple of other deities as well. She loves her four children and works long hours as a maid in a wealthy Chinese-Malaysian household to provide for them. Jaya is a huge fan of Bollywood movies and loves to go the local open-air restaurants, where she can sit down in front of a television with a plate of butter naan and curry. She identifies strongly with her

Indian ethnicity and culture, longing for the day when she can save enough money to visit her relatives in the motherland. Ultimately, she hopes that the choices she makes in this life will earn a better reincarnation in the next.

Jaya's daughter, Dunushi, came of age in the late 2000s while wandering the long hallways of any number of shiny new shopping malls in the city. She learned English well as a child, speaks six languages, and excels in Tamil, English, and Bahasa Malaysia. Her friend group is ethnically and religiously diverse, with a slight majority of them consisting of English-speaking Chinese-Malaysians. Having grown up seeing the constant tension of segregated communities, she and her friends are highly committed to show no judgment toward anyone based on religion or ethnicity. While some of her friends are passionate about affirming transgender ideology, she quietly stays away from those discussions because she hasn't yet seen convincing evidence for it. She has a gifted scientific mind and passionately believes that society can progress if we just ask the right questions and let the science lead us to the answers, without bias. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, she was exasperated with all the people around her making life decisions, both for themselves and for others, without consulting the scientific data available to them. She joins her family for occasional trips to the temple and celebrates their religious festivals, including Thaipusam and Deepavali, but for her they are simply cultural celebrations. She has a strong distaste for watching people convulse when they became entranced by the priest during Thaipusam. Dunushi loves going to the mall with her friends but is just as content to stay home and connect with them over social media. She spends a great deal of time sharing pictures and ideas on Instagram and she loves keeping up with the personal lives of musicians and influencers from various parts of the world. She loves shopping and has a weakness for shoes she can't afford. If you asked her what her religious beliefs are, she would undoubtedly say "I am Hindu," since her parents have made it clear for her entire life that to be Indian is to be Hindu.

Dunushi's heart worldview is modernism. Polytheism and animism are not a part of her daily life. Any effort to share the gospel with her would need to include a strong apologetic for one God as Creator and an engagement with evolutionary Darwinianism. If she were to become

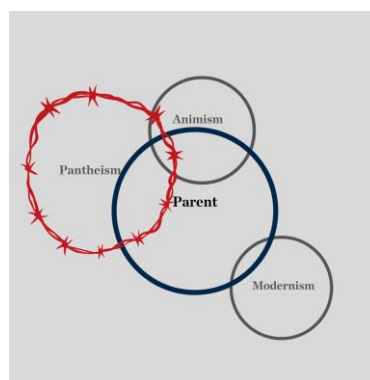
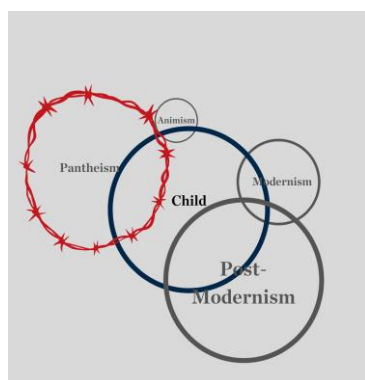


a Christian, her spiritual leaders would be wise to help her understand how her worldview would tend to make her gravitate to what Hiebert calls a "split-level" Christianity, where God and "religion" exist in a different sphere of life while we deal with what is "real" in our day to day lives (Hiebert 2008, 144). However, it would be a mistake to not take her costly worldview seriously. My proposal here is that polytheism is the barbed wire in this case (This is a good place, however, to admit that this process is an art more than a science. I readily admit that guessing will

often be involved). Her parents may interpret becoming a Christian as a rejection of their Indian heritage, causing a great deal of friction that may never heal. So it would be natural for her, once she became open to the existence of a real and tangible god, to first make sure that she can't find the answers to the major life questions in Hindu practices and beliefs.

In both of the previous illustrations, it's clear that the children do not cherish the religious beliefs of their parents and their traditional culture. It would be a mistake, however, to look at youth in our global cities and assume this is always the case. It could even be a mistake to assume that it's *normally* the case. Regardless, even when children embrace the religious worldview of their parents, there can still be significant cultural differences between them.

For example, it would not be uncommon for a Chinese-Malaysian youth in Malaysia to strongly identify with the Buddhism that he was taught from childhood, yet simultaneously identify with the global cultures of modernism and postmodernism as well. Even in the case below (a Chinese-Malaysian youth and parent), the differences in the world in which the parent and child grew up in will include significantly different cultural influences.



Conclusion

As we engage in cross-cultural disciple making, we need to remain aware that there will be various levels of consistency between religious labels and actual worldviews. While we need to have the ability to pivot and discuss what is happening at the heart level, we also need to avoid neglecting the stated religion. Not only is this where persecution is likely to be experienced, but it is often intertwined with their ethnic and national identities as well. The worldview mapping tool attempts to help people visualize the various competing worldviews, as well as layers of identity, in a way that clarifies the task of evangelistic communication.

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