

The Core-based Worldview model

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Abstract

This essay starts at the proposition that there is not yet a satisfying way to differentiate between different worldviews. Although many attempts have been made, they fail in ways that are difficult to pinpoint. The usual way of researching a worldview is to start from a set of questions that are deemed fundamental to our beliefs, a method the author regards as flawed. In this essay it is instead proposed that we should regard actions and behaviour to determine worldview, because they lead us to the essential part of worldview, the core. To get a worldview with this method, we would categorise different tendencies of actions of individuals, instead of trying to ask them questions and categorising the answers. From this, a model of four different worldviews is established based of four different aims that are sought in actions. These for are: the way of virtue; the way of empowerment or worldly security; the way of pleasure; and the way of spiritual liberation or salvation. The aim of this model is to increase our explanatory power in terms of what people believe, why they act as they do, and what decisions they reach.

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Introduction

When trying to figure out why people act as they do, what they believe and what decisions they make, philosophers have for centuries turned to the concept *worldview*. With this concept we can begin to understand how each individual answers the most fundamental questions of life and the world, such as “what is real?” and “What can I know?”. These questions frame our thinking, which opens up for the possibility of increasing our understanding of ourselves and others by investigating the worldview.

Before the rampant increase in information flows of the industrial and informational revolutions, answers to these questions were fairly static, with most individuals in a region ascribing to roughly the same worldview, such as Christianity in Europe, a prime example of such a worldview. However, rise in pluralism in the modern world has created problems when examining answers to these fundamental questions. In contrast to pre-industrialisation, two on the surface quite similar individuals may nowadays have radically different answers to the same questions. We can no longer simply say that someone has a Christian worldview or a Naturalist worldview, because within these groups there are many different individuals who answer these questions in different ways. This has led us to question the very nature of the concept worldview, giving rise to many works and articles on its definition and how we should go about to find out the worldview of each person. While we have indeed come very far in this project and now have a firm grasp on which questions to include in the concept, as well as how we should go about to figure out how a single individual answers these worldview-questions, we have however not yet established a decisive categorisation of worldviews that we can generalise over groups of individuals. New models do exist to address the problem, and some of them do a great job in giving explanatory power over groups or categories of individuals, and I am impressed over how intuitive and successful some are. Unfortunately however, they all fall short mostly by using a flawed method. In trying to include as many parameters as possible, the worldviews stated in these models are either too many to be able to get an overarching understanding of, or they collide into each other, making it impossible to say clearly which worldview an individual actually has. The predicament lies in the fact that individual worldviews are fragmented, incoherent and inconsistent in different ways, rendering a model that wants to use the same questions for each individual mostly unusable. This has left philosophers of religion grappling after worldviews, clinging to old ones or grasping for new ones,

significantly lowering our understanding over what people believe, how they think and how they reach decisions. In this essay I address this problem firstly by introducing a new core-based method of differentiating worldviews from each other. Secondly I implement this method by establishing a model of worldviews (a classification of worldviews) that is less comprehensive when it comes to each individual, but that has a high, generalising explanatory power over groups or categories of individuals. Hopefully then, this model will have a high enough explanatory power to help us understand what people believe, why they act as they do and how they reach decisions.

Purpose and scientific question

When speaking of worldviews, we have come far in establishing which questions the concept should contain and how it is to be defined, this part of the field is now unified and theories are widely accepted. From this, many comprehensive models have been created that give an intuitive and overarching understanding over how people relate to the world. However, all of these models fall short when put to the test, possibly for the reason that they all start from the same questions we pose when trying to establish one individual worldview and then subsequently to categorise the answers into a model. This has led to a fragmented field without yet a decisive model of categorising worldviews, and moreover without a satisfying method of reaching these categories. This fragmentation has arisen because when categorising worldviews we start from the wrong end, from the definition of worldview and then working our way out to categories. I propose instead that when trying to reach generalised worldviews, we start by investigating how we can differentiate them from each other by identifying the core, the most important part of a worldview. This will lead us clearer towards a way to separate worldviews, which will make them easier to categorise. Hopefully this will increase our explanatory power in terms of what people believe, why they act as they do and how they reach decisions, which is the purpose of this essay. And this purpose is fulfilled by presenting a new method of differentiating and identifying worldviews, which leads me to my first scientific question:

How can we look at worldviews so as to be able to differentiate between them?

But I shall not stop there, for the purpose of this essay is not merely to present a new method. Rather I intend also to implement this method into a new categorisation of worldviews which I

hope will have higher explanatory power than previous models. The next question thus reads as follows:

How can we implement the core-based methodology into a worldview model?

Following these questions, I would like to make clear that it is only this distinguishing and categorisation of worldviews that I undertake. Previous philosophers of religion and psychologists of worldview have already established a good grasp on what the worldview is and what questions it should contain, so this need not be worked on.

Furthermore, I do not in any way compare worldviews so as to see whether one is better than the other. I make no value judgment whatsoever in this respect. When the words ‘compare’ and ‘explanation’ appear in this essay they refer to the comparison of which worldview model has the highest explanatory power, not which worldview is the best to live by or which is the most plausible or believable.

In this differentiation of worldviews I have also decided to disregard the linguistic factor completely, that is the theories that take into question languages to see how these affect our way of seeing the world. Albeit an interesting subject and indeed something that may in reality and quite effectively affect how we think and how we see the world, it is a subject of investigation of which there is simply no room for in this essay.

Disposition

The space I have at my disposal I divide into two main parts. In the first part I go over the field and discuss problems faced within. This part is crucial in the creation of a worldview model, since to be able to differentiate between worldviews we need a firm grasp of the concept and its field. Here I go over available definitions, worldview-questions and models of categorisation. I hope in the first part of the essay to provide sufficient information for the reader to understand the problem at hand, namely that there is not yet a satisfying way to differentiate between worldviews.

Come the second part, I present a new method for categorising worldviews. The method is based on a new way of handling the questions, which briefly stated can be said involves identifying the core of a worldview. The core is what has the highest explanatory power of how people make decisions, which is why it is this part that must be used in the process of differentiation. Using this method, a model of worldviews is subsequently developed.

Previous research and material

The topic of Weltanschauung, the German term for worldview which has been adopted to English, has been developed and theorised on for the last couple of centuries. Especially in the 19th century it had a prominent role in the study of philosophy, even with its own term *Weltanschauungsphilosophie*. A few philosophers worth mentioning in this topic are Hegel, Kierkegaard, Dilthey, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Jaspers and Husserl.¹ Although what I do in this essay cannot exactly be called by this term, it can still be of value to sometimes glance back and regard what minds of previous times thought of the concept worldview. For this, I use David K. Naugle's book *Worldview: the history of a concept* which is a comprehensive historical briefing of the concept.²

The subject has changed rather a lot since the 19th century, and the contemporary literature is thus quite different. Instead of trying, as the 19th century Germans did, to create so to speak 'the best' worldview, the subject has delved into defining what the term even means, what it consists of and moreover what it should consist of. Philosophers in this fields nowadays, then, try to categorise worldviews so as to be able to differentiate between them and even only to grasp them. This contemporary era started around the 1970's and has looked like this ever since. My work will use almost in its entirety works from this era, with authors as for example Hedlund-De Witt, a prominent psychologist in this field in the Netherlands working with different categorisations and discussing them in terms of sustainability.³ Further authors I include are; Leontiev, also a psychologist, working on ways of determining a person's ultimate meaning, which according to him is part of a worldview;⁴ Aerts et al. who give many propositions of how to categorise worldviews;⁵ and lastly Rousseau and Billingham who approach the worldview categories from a systems-perspective, giving an overview over the fundamental questions.⁶ But there are many authors which have theorised in this area that I have not included, such as James W. Sire, who have

¹ David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids, Mich, 2002). P. ix.

² Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept*.

³ Annick De Witt and others, 'A New Tool to Map the Major Worldviews in the Netherlands and USA, and Explore How They Relate to Climate Change', *Environmental Science and Policy*, 63 (2016), 101–12.

⁴ Dmitry A. Leontiev, 'Approaching Worldview Structure with Ultimate Meanings Technique', *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 47/2 (2007), 243–66.

⁵ Diedrik Aerts and others, 'World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration' (Brussels, 1994).

⁶ David Rousseau and Julie Billingham, 'A Systematic Framework for Exploring Worldviews and Its Generalization as a Multi-Purpose Inquiry Framework', *Systems*, 6/3 (2018), 27.

written much of worldviews from a Christian perspective;⁷ Ninian Smart who philosophizes over the concept's meaning;⁸ Robert Cummings Neville, talking about different aspects of worldview;⁹ and Koltko-Rivera, who relates worldview to psychological factors.¹⁰

For the second more constructive part of the essay, I firstly need a theoretical background not only for worldview, but for belief. Since the former consists of the latter, it is only logical to put a significant amount of effort to this inescapable part of the worldview. So, in this theoretical part references are made to three main theories of belief: representationism; interpretationism; and dispositionalism, and literature has been chosen accordingly. For representationism, I use only Stanford's encyclopedia of philosophy article on belief.¹¹ But there are many advocates of representationism, for example; Fodor;¹² Millikan;¹³ and Dretske.¹⁴ Dispositionalism I have let be represented by Gilbert Ryle, the founder of this theory of belief, with some references to Kevin Schilbrack.¹⁵ Lastly, for interpretationism I have made use of both Daniel Dennett and Donald Davidson, two of the most prominent expounders of the subject. For Dennett I use *The Intentional Stance*, in which he theorises on interpretationism, and for Davidson I use mainly *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*.¹⁶

Lastly, for the model I develop myself adapted from Indian philosophy, I use a couple of authors that cover the Purusartha, which is what I am interested in, namely: Arvind Sharma and his book *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction*, and *Introducing Hinduism* by Hillary P. Rodrigues.¹⁷ On top of these two I use a couple of articles specifically on the Purusartha by Arvind Sharma

⁷ James W. Sire, *The Universe next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 4th edn (Downers Grove, Ill, 2004).

⁸ Ninian Smart, *Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs*, 3rd edn (Upper Saddle River, N.J, 2000).

⁹ Robert Cummings Neville, 'Worldviews', *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy*, 30/3 (2009), 233–43.

¹⁰ Mark E. Koltko-Rivera, 'The Psychology of Worldviews', *Review of General Psychology*, 8/1 (2004), 3–58.

¹¹ Eric Schwitzgebel, 'Belief', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward N. Zalta, Summer 2015 (2015) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2015/entries/belief/>> [accessed 3 December 2018].

¹² Jerry A. Fodor, *Representations: Philosophical Essays on the Foundations of Cognitive Science* (Brighton, Sussex, 1981), XIII.

¹³ Ruth Garrett Millikan, *Language, Thought, and Other Biological Categories: New Foundations for Realism* (Cambridge, Mass, 1984).

¹⁴ Fred Dretske, 'Psychological vs. Biological Explanations of Behavior', *Behavior and Philosophy*, 32/1 (2004), 167–77.

¹⁵ Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (Harmondsworth, 1949); K. Schilbrack, *Philosophy and the Study of Religions: A Manifesto* (2014).

¹⁶ Daniel Clement Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge, Mass, 1987); Donald Davidson, *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (New York; Oxford, 2001).

¹⁷ Arvind Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction* (New Delhi, 2001); Hillary P Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*, Second (London; New York, 2017).

among others. Others who have written on the Purusartha are; Louis Renou, who writes on Hinduism;¹⁸ and John M. Koller, who criticises Arvind Sharmas conception of the Purusartha.¹⁹ For this model I have given complementary explanation by including Kierkegaard's views on life, for the simple reason that his theories are surprisingly similar to the Purusartha, if by coincidence or not I cannot say.²⁰

Method

In this first part of the analysis I describe the field, what is being studied and which problems can be identified. My method of analysis will be centred on ideas rather than the proponents of these ideas, as per the two options stated by methodologist Ludwig Beckman.²¹ As such, I try to systematise the ideas and order them as in the method of analysis of ideas.²² The analysis is descriptive, comparative and critical. In practice, this means that I for each idea state its content, take a critical stance towards it and subsequently compare it to other ideas. In the descriptive part I do my best to pick relevant facts so as to convey the main meaning of the idea and give the reader a fair view of the content, whilst at the same time keeping in mind to summarise it and making it easily graspable. The content is criticised by locating faults, arbitrariness, misconceptions, incoherence, and inconclusive arguments as well as points that deserve contention for other reasons of disagreement, as per usual in an analysis of ideas. Intertwined with this critique, I also try to compare with other authors' ideas or models. Theories are compared with each other to see whether one is more effective than the other. This entails in part one to see which model and categorisation of worldviews holds the best explanatory power in terms of both scope and depth, and in part two which theory of beliefs works best for the application on the concept worldview, and which is most plausible.

¹⁸ Louis Renou, *Hinduism* (New York; London; 1961).

¹⁹ John M. Koller, 'Puruṣārthas as Human Aims', *Philosophy East and West*, 18/4 (1968), 315–19.

²⁰ Søren Kierkegaard, *Antingen - Eller*, trans. by Ingmar Simonsson (Stockholm, 2013).

²¹ Ludvig Beckman, *Grundbok i Idéanalys: Det Kritiska Studiet Av Politiska Texter Och Idéer* (Stockholm, 2005). P. 17.

²² Beckman, *Grundbok i Idéanalys: Det Kritiska Studiet Av Politiska Texter Och Idéer*. P.50.

Part One

Definition and application of worldview and worldview model

While definitions of the concept worldview differ slightly from paper to paper, they are still fairly uniform. From this section we shall increase our understanding of this uniformity and therein thoroughly grasp the concept. Expressing an excellent straight up definition is philosopher of religion Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm who describes worldview as an “overarching interpretation of the world” (my translation).²³ What he means by this is our own intuition of the fundamentals of the world and our life. In practice, this takes expression in what Koltko-Rivera calls “a set of beliefs”, i.e. a series of statements of the world.²⁴ Examples of such statements are seen everywhere if one looks for them, and a prominent such statement could for instance be the belief of Thales of Miletus that all is ultimately made out of water.²⁵ More specifically, Aerts et al. say these statements are a “collection of concepts and theorems”, and accordingly they are seldom only blank statements or platitudes, rather they often have at the least a small or even tiny explanation behind them, although this is by no means a requirement.²⁶

Beliefs included into the worldview are foundational to our way of grasping the world. Through them and with them we perceive the world as we think it is. As such, far from all beliefs belong in the concept. For instance, my belief that a coffee cup sits on the table next to me is not part of my worldview, for it is by no means foundational. Would I say on the other hand that the coffee cup and the table it sits upon are fundamentally made out of atoms that randomly float around in space, such a statement would be an expression of my ontological beliefs of the world and it should therefore belong in my worldview. Basically, we can put it simply by saying that the worldview is how we see the world, or that it is our frame of reference to which we relate to the world. Furthermore we would have to add what Rousseau and Billingham so eloquently states, namely

²³ Carl-Reinhold Bråkenhielm, *Människan i Världen: Om Filosofi, Teologi Och Etik i Våra Världsbilder = [The Human Being in the World] : [On Philosophy, Theology and Ethics in Our Worldviews]* (Uppsala;Stockholm;, 1992), I. P. 9.

²⁴ Koltko-Rivera, ‘The Psychology of Worldviews’, 3–58. P.4.

²⁵ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. by Robert Drew Hicks (Cambridge, MA, 2014), CLXXXIV-185;184-185.; 1.27.

²⁶ Aerts and others, ‘World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration’. P.8.

that worldviews are ever evolving with the integration of new knowledge, and are used to “make decisions about how to live and what to do”.²⁷

What then, is a model of worldviews? Well, when dealing with worldviews we do not want to understand only one person, rather philosophers of religion are prone to putting bulks of individuals into categories in which all supposedly have the same or similar worldviews. One could for instance say that there in that case exists a Christian worldview opposed to a Naturalist worldview, as James W. Sire’s categories work.²⁸ But as I have stated in the introduction, worldviews are usually fragmented and incoherent, making this project more difficult than it seems. There are undoubtedly Christians with differing beliefs from other Christians, and if these differences are too substantial, the model loses its explanatory power. Nonetheless, this is what we call a model, and we create them to be applicable on many different individuals so as to elucidate what brings them together and what distinguishes them from others. What a worldview model does is thus to provide grounds of classification for worldviews which gives us ways to look at not only the worldview of a single individual, but of groups of individuals.

In essence, while the worldview is an overarching understanding of the world, the worldview model is an overarching understanding of worldviews.

The discourse

When discussing worldviews, the common way of going about is to start by discussing which information and which beliefs are to be incorporated into the concept. We are in that case looking for certain categories of thought that lie as a substrate to all others and do not easily budge. My belief that a coffee cup sits on my table is therefore not such a belief. What we seek are rather the foundational beliefs that relate to our entire paradigm. I will therefore from now on call these *paradigmatic* beliefs. These beliefs are answers to questions that comprise the worldview, and need to be sought out and listed before we can start any categorisation. Moreover, these are questions to which, according to Mikael Stenmark, a philosopher of religion, a worldview must provide

²⁷ Rousseau and Billingham, ‘A Systematic Framework for Exploring Worldviews and Its Generalization as a Multi-Purpose Inquiry Framework’, 27. P. 3.

²⁸ Sire, *The Universe next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. Pp. 23, 59.

answers.²⁹ Without these questions, a worldview is not satisfied; it is not a worldview. Consequently, we must begin by going over these questions.

Mikael Stenmark defines at least three categories as foundation for a worldview: ontology (what is), epistemology (what we think knowledge is) and axiology (what is good and what is bad).³⁰ To this, Aerts et al. in their article of worldviews add explanation (a model of the past) and futurology (where are we headed).³¹ Bråkenhielm, moreover, adds teleology (what is the meaning of it all?) and more specifically as a subcategory, soteriology (what is the point of suffering?).³² Furthermore, we have an anthropological dimension (what is humanity's place?), an ethical dimension (how best to live our lives) and a societal dimension (what is the best way to organise ourselves?), these last two both regarded as subcategories to axiology.³³

At this point we are already up to around 10 different categories of beliefs, and while there are a few others we could include, these are the most commonly mentioned and more will only spark confusion. Having made clear which kinds of beliefs and knowledge should be included in a worldview, stated some categories of these beliefs, we can now move on to looking at different models of dividing worldviews based on these categories of beliefs.

Most (all except Leontiev) are based on the method of taking these questions and subsequently dividing individuals who answer them similarly into groups. While this method has worked excellently in determining a single worldview, we are now posed with problems when we try to categorise these answers. As a complement to the section on previous research we shall go through some models which I think demonstrate excellent models of explanation, but that still have to deal with this problem of categorisation. I have chosen to demonstrate these models for two reasons; firstly it is to show how a worldview model works, how they commonly look and what problems they face; the second reason is that I base my method and mode on the problems and benefits of these models, and I hope therefore that they will provide sufficient background for what follows.

²⁹ Mikael Stenmark, *Tankar Om Gud, Kristen Tro Och Livets Mening: En Samling Religionsfilosofiska Essäer* (Skellefteå, 2016). Pp. 11-13.

³⁰ Stenmark, *Tankar Om Gud, Kristen Tro Och Livets Mening: En Samling Religionsfilosofiska Essäer*. Pp. 11-15.

³¹ Aerts and others, 'World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration'. P. 13.

³² Bråkenhielm, *Människan i Världen: Om Filosofi, Teologi Och Etik i Våra Världsbilder = [The Human Being in the World] : [On Philosophy, Theology and Ethics in Our Worldviews]*, I. P. 17.

³³ De Witt and others, 'A New Tool to Map the Major Worldviews in the Netherlands and USA, and Explore How They Relate to Climate Change', 101-12. P. 102.

Integrative Worldview Framework

Annick Hedlund-De Witt divides worldviews into four categories in what she calls the Integrative Worldview Framework (henceforth referred to as IWF): the traditional, modern, post-modern and integrative worldviews.³⁴ The first three views have been borrowed from Charles Taylor who notes differences in views between the stream of thought signified by Enlightenment ideals of objectivity and that of a post-modern cultural worldview, next to the traditional worldview with conservative theist values.³⁵ In addition to these she adds one of her own, the integrative worldview, which is a synthesis of the three former into a modern spiritual view. For each of the worldviews she puts to use five categories of the above mentioned beliefs to which they must provide answers: ontology, epistemology, axiology, anthropology and societal vision. These have been applied to the IWF as follows.

First, the traditional worldview bases its ontological category on the metaphysics of a God which has purposively created the universe. Epistemology is based on authority and text interpretation. Axiology is founded on tradition, conformity and security with an emphasis on family. Humanity is seen as a steward of earth and depends on a transcendent entity to be saved from existence. Their societal vision is allegedly traditional societies with emphasis on farming, and they depend on religious authorities to provide them with this ideal.³⁶

Second, the modern worldview has as its ontology materialism in a mechanistic universe brought about by random selection and lacking meaning. Their epistemology is similar to that of the natural sciences: neo-positivist and reductionist. Materialist values make up the axiology with power, achievement and hedonism in the centre. The modern view sees humanity as in control of nature and as self-optimizing, independent beings. Their societal vision is a technological, automatized society in which mechanisation will solve our problems.

Third comes the post-modern worldview, which holds ontology as pluralist and constructed. Meaning is created through cultural construction. Their epistemology is relativist and pluralist and axiology is based on self-expression with emphasis on unique individuality. As for their

³⁴ Annick Hedlund- De Witt, 'Worldviews and the Transformation to Sustainable Societies. An Exploration of the Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Our Global Environmental Challenges' (Vrije Universiteit, 2013). P. 251.

³⁵ Hedlund- De Witt, 'Worldviews and the Transformation to Sustainable Societies. An Exploration of the Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Our Global Environmental Challenges'. P 250-251.

³⁶ Hedlund- De Witt, 'Worldviews and the Transformation to Sustainable Societies. An Exploration of the Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Our Global Environmental Challenges'. P 264-265.

anthropology, they see humanity as in a cautious relation to nature. Humanity is centred around unique identities. Their societal vision is based around creative industry and the tearing down of hierarchies to give power equal to all.

The fourth, called the integrative worldview, is a synthesis of the first three, with the ontology as material and transcendent, and the universe as a manifestation of spirit. Their epistemology is a kind of pragmatism and critical realism, using both scientific and religious authority as well as subjective knowledge as authorities. Their axiology is based on self-expression and transcendence and they see humanity as uniform with nature in a synergy. Lastly, they have a societal vision of consciousness growth with creative solutions to problems.³⁷

Thanks to Taylor's background work which tracks the first three of these worldviews through their emergence in the modern Western world, this model can be intuitively understood, since at least the first three categories can at least at first glance be recognised in society.³⁸ However, this renders the model only applicable in the modern Western world. Rather than being a problem though, its limited focus gives it higher explanatory power in its area of application. So far, this model seems to have applied the worldview questions in an exemplary manner.

Moving on, while this model seems *prima facie* quite good at differentiating between worldviews, it appeared when tested empirically that a large part of test participants do not adhere smoothly to any of the categories. Thus, the author had to add a fifth category, the "mixed" which became the largest category with around 28 % of the participants.³⁹ It must be said then, that this model is inapplicable to a fourth of the population, for the reason that this mixed category seems to have been haphazardly put together in virtue of the fact that some of the participants were not able to adhere to any of the other categories. Accordingly, we might as well instead call these left over participants' worldviews undefined. Because, it is probably not the case that these people have "mixed" worldviews, rather it is only a failure of the model to capture them.

³⁷ Hedlund- De Witt, 'Worldviews and the Transformation to Sustainable Societies. An Exploration of the Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Our Global Environmental Challenges'. P 264-265.

³⁸ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, 1989).

³⁹ De Witt and others, 'A New Tool to Map the Major Worldviews in the Netherlands and USA, and Explore How They Relate to Climate Change', 101–12. P. 108.

Furthermore, for the post-modern and the integrative worldviews, correlation between values were as low as 0,4, making the two categories unstable and incoherent.⁴⁰ To give reasonable explanatory power these categories must be more rigid than a 0,4 correlation lets them be, which unfortunately renders these two categories as well inadmissible. As a consequence, the model only explains roughly 40 % of the population, which clearly isn't enough. Nevertheless, we can learn from these low numbers of correlation that worldviews are more fragmented and less conformist than previously thought. Here we can thus pose the question whether the same questions are applicable to all of the different worldviews. Perhaps, for example, one worldview puts higher emphasis on ontology, while another values their epistemological views the highest? In that case, this could be calibrated to reach a better performing model. However, such an enterprise runs the risk of becoming drawn out without guarantee of success. Instead, a new method of differentiation should be sought. I must still maintain though, that it is my firm belief that this model is one of the best efforts made so far. Unfortunately it misses the mark on most of the population by using a flawed method.

Bråkenhielm

Another model I want to bring up is Bråkenhielm's. In this model, worldviews are divided by which area of reality is deemed by the individual to be the most principal.⁴¹ The three areas are God, humanity and nature, compounding respectively three worldviews: the theocentric; the anthropocentric; and the biocentric. To these worldviews, Bråkenhielm applies five of the abovementioned categories: ethics, epistemology, ontology, teleology and explanatory. I will not go over each of these principal worldviews, because what makes Bråkenhielm's theory interesting is not the categorisation itself, but rather that he is open to the possibility that all of the belief categories might not belong to the principal area of reality. A person may for instance have a theocentric worldview, with theocentric explanations and theocentric ethics, yet with an anthropocentric teleology. This is in line with his view that he borrows from Habermas, that

⁴⁰ De Witt and others, 'A New Tool to Map the Major Worldviews in the Netherlands and USA, and Explore How They Relate to Climate Change', 101–12. P. 108.

⁴¹ Bråkenhielm, *Människan i Världen: Om Filosofi, Teologi Och Etik i Våra Världsbilder = [The Human Being in the World] : [On Philosophy, Theology and Ethics in Our Worldviews]*, 1. P. 16.

worldviews rather fragmented, with snippets of knowledge coming from different places and areas.⁴² In this respect, it is an improvement to the IWF.

Furthermore, Bråkenhielm's model has been developed by looking back and referencing to history, and is therefore in that aspect quite useful. It is possible, probable even, that a historic individual like for example Aristarchus of Samos should fit into this model well, could we get the relevant information. One could then contrast a modern person to the ancients etc. This, however, might equally be to the detriment of the model, because if we find in some way that a modern person does indeed seem to have the same worldview as Aristarchus of Samos, mustn't there be something that we have missed? Should not the difference be vast between these two individuals, notwithstanding these theoretical results? Well, the answer to this question depends on what we want worldview to entail. One might reasonably argue that the differences between epochs are merely cultural and technological, and that these two parameters should not be included in the concept. The worldview is then rightly the way in which we view the world, not what we view, as defined earlier. By that definition, a worldview does not have to change when the world itself changes, allowing for historical and contemporary worldviews to be similar. We must here still remember that there exists in Bråkenhielm's model many different worldviews, and nothing guarantees that the worldview of Aristarchus would fit, there is merely this possibility. This possibility stands in contrast to the previously discussed IWF, in which the worldview of Aristarchus would not fit except by mere chance.

Standing on its own however, Bråkenhielm's model has one palpable flaw. If each worldview can have different centres on each of the categories of belief, this would yield a total amount of different worldviews of 3 to the power of 5, which amounts to the total of 243 different worldviews. Such a number is obviously too large to provide a framework on which to base a theoretical discussion, since getting an overview of all 243 different views is clearly impossible. This flaw of the model renders it without explanatory power on an overarching level, even if it has given us more knowledge of the concept and how it can be modelled. What is more, this flaw might be insignificant when examining a single worldview, but in this discussion I wish to stress the importance of being able to distinguish worldviews from each other so as to be able to achieve an

⁴² Bråkenhielm, *Människan i Världen: Om Filosofi, Teologi Och Etik i Våra Världsbilder* = [*The Human Being in the World*] : [*On Philosophy, Theology and Ethics in Our Worldviews*], 1. P. 13.

overarching understanding, hence the scientific question of differentiating worldviews, not defining them.

Ultimate Meanings Technique

As a third theory I would like to present the Ultimate Meanings Technique (UMT) by Dmitry Leontiev, prof. dr. of psychology. He gives worldview four aspects:

- a) Content: the factual beliefs of the individual, for example “All flowers have leaves”.
- b) Value: axiological statements which deals with what is good and what is bad, for example “Spitting in the underground is unacceptable”.
- c) Structural: A way of achieving coherence between beliefs.
- d) Functional: Handles the way of how the worldview is conveyed through actions, whether for example one waives on one’s beliefs or defends them staunchly.⁴³

He moreover asserts that at the core of a worldview lies generalisations such as the earlier stated example “all flowers have leaves”, which help as navigate through the world. These generalisations are then projected onto the world in the form of actions.⁴⁴ From this he derives his UMT, a technique for finding the reasons for people’s actions. Through that way one can get to their ultimate meaning, which he deems a fundamental part of a worldview. This technique requires an hour of evaluation for each subject, starting with a simple question as for example “Why do you watch TV?” and then repeating the inquisition of “why?” until the subject cannot give further answers, at which point the last answer should be the ultimate meaning.⁴⁵ We should by asking these questions be able to get to the ultimate reasons for an individual’s actions.

Now, this technique sounds similar to something a psychologist would use to evaluate his or her subject, and indeed that is what it is. So in what way is it relevant for the kind of philosophy done in this essay? Its praxeological approach brings to light that it might be possible to evaluate a person’s beliefs from regarding or asking about their actions. This technique has to for that reason presuppose logical connection between beliefs and actions, which is quite uncontroversial and something we will return to. Using actions could thus be a good way to get to worldview.

⁴³ Leontiev, ‘Approaching Worldview Structure with Ultimate Meanings Technique’, 243–66. P. 245.

⁴⁴ Leontiev, ‘Approaching Worldview Structure with Ultimate Meanings Technique’, 243–66. P. 246.

⁴⁵ Leontiev, ‘Approaching Worldview Structure with Ultimate Meanings Technique’, 243–66. P. 247.

Furthermore, Leontiev talks of a 'core' of a worldview, which helps us navigate through the world. If it was indeed his intention to divide the worldview into parts by importance, then this is a move that may have significant impact on the concept. For our problem in earlier models have been one of concentration. We seem not to have been able to establish a substantial part of each worldview that we can use to distinguish from others. We shall see if we can Leontiev's division further on.

Leontiev's technique I think we can declare is quite brilliant. But it has one palpable flaw viz. that it takes up to an hour to evaluate each subject. Moreover, for each subject we will receive qualitative answers which will be difficult to assess. Thus, the model is largely inapplicable on larger amounts of individuals, disregarding its brilliance on a single subject.

Additionally, what we are discussing here is a technique, a method of evaluation, and not actually a worldview model. Therefore, this is admittedly not what we are after since it is not a tool used to create generalizable categories of worldviews. Nonetheless, the technique presented by Leontiev will make its mark on the method to come.

Part two

Theory

What we notice from the models above is that it is very difficult to figure out what a person believes, let alone formalise this in a manner that makes these beliefs easily manageable. The method commonly accepted in the field and used by both Bråkenhielm and Hedlund-De Witt, of firstly stating a certain amount of types of belief, such as ontology, epistemology etc, and forming questions out of these has proven impractical. While it is excellent for determining the worldview of a single individual, it leaves us stranded in constructing a model of generalising categories. In this section I instead propose a new method of categorising worldviews by putting focus on what is most important for the individual herself, and differentiating between the natures of these important beliefs. This way we can bypass the difficult and impractical questions and end up with a model that is less comprehensive but with high, generalising explanatory power.

To guide us through to this new method I touch upon three different theories of belief: interpretationism, dispositionalism and representationism. Note here that I shall in this essay use these positions merely methodologically so as to get to belief without discussing their ontological statements on belief.

Let's start with Interpretationism, the theory that our beliefs can be sought by looking at our actions.⁴⁶ For Daniel Dennett, a prominent interpretationist, beliefs are embodied patterns of behaviour rather than mere mental representations.⁴⁷ Now, the representationist will certainly have counters to this, which we shall get to further on. But whatever the ontology of belief, whether it is only embodied patterns of behaviour or mental representations, we can say that at least some beliefs do indeed guide behaviour. Whatever conception of belief one has, then, one must concede that observing behaviour is one way of getting to belief. This is the basis of my method.

But belief does not seem to be the only piece of the puzzle we need to explain behaviour. Just because there is a mountain and I am at the bottom of it does not mean that I will climb it, or, if you see me climbing the mountain it does not suffice to say that I believed it was there to explain

⁴⁶ Davidson, *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*. P. 100.

⁴⁷ Schwitzgebel, 'Belief'.

why I climb it. We also need what Donald Davidson, another known interpretationist, calls a “pro attitude” i.e. a want or a desire:

R is a primary reason why an agent performed the action A under the description d only if R consists of a pro attitude of the agent toward actions with a certain property, and a belief of the agent that A, under the description d, has that property.⁴⁸

This all works perfectly well when interpreting a single action, such as for example: he is climbing the mountain because he wanted to be at the top, and climbing the mountain will get him to the top. When speaking of belief systems or worldviews however, the task becomes slightly more complicated. Obviously, it would be impossible to look at one single action and from that derive an entire worldview. We must instead regard an overall tendency of which direction the agent is taking. This tendency is determined by our desires and beliefs. So, as with the mountain analogy, both beliefs and desires determine whether an action is to be undertaken. If we apply the same principle to an entire life, we should be able to notice what we could call a tendency or leniency towards a certain way of living. This is not to say that everyone has systematically worked out which path to take, or that everyone even knows which direction they are taking. But everyone tries in some way, however bad it may seem, to live their life in a way that seems fair or reasonable to them. This attempt at life is what we will look at, and it is seen in the tendency of action.

So far it seems that if we want to get to a person’s worldview, we should regard his or her behaviour and try to separate the wants from intentional actions so as to discern the underlying beliefs that make up the worldview. However, an attempt at separation will likely end in the conclusion of the task’s impossibility. Instead we shall let desires steer us towards the beliefs we need for the concept worldview. For desires and beliefs need not be separable from each other, rather they seem to determine and affect each other. We see this partly in studies of wishful thinking, for example in one by Bastardi et al. where participants were proved more prone to believe what they wanted to believe even when faced with equal evidence to a contrary and less desirable position.⁴⁹ From such a study, it might be drastic to conclude that we believe only what we desire to be true, but we can

⁴⁸ Donald Davidson, ‘Actions, Reasons, and Causes’, *The Journal of Philosophy*, 60/23 (1963), 685–700. P 687.

⁴⁹ Anthony Bastardi, Eric Luis Uhlmann and Lee Ross, ‘Wishful Thinking: Belief, Desire, and the Motivated Evaluation of Scientific Evidence’, *Psychological Science*, 22/6 (2011), 731–32.

at least notice that our desires partly determine what we believe. This same position is what Nietzsche propounded with his perspectivism:

It is our needs that interpret the world; our drives and their For and Against⁵⁰

What we can say is that there are beliefs that concern our desires, i.e. beliefs of what will better and what will worsen our position in terms of our desires. These are more important than those that do not concern our desires because they produce motivational reasons that the individual acts upon. Let's demonstrate this with another example: Sara believes there is liquorice in the cupboard, and has a craving for liquorice. This leads her to walk over to the cupboard open it and take a bite of liquorice. Both the desire and the belief is crucial for this action to take place: without the desire to eat liquorice no liquorice would have been eaten, and without the belief that there was liquorice in the cupboard, she would not have walked over to the cupboard to look for it. These kind of beliefs that are tied to desires guide behaviour, and we shall therefore call them *guiding beliefs*. Following, we shall let these steer us towards a categorisation of worldviews.

However, within representationism, the theory that beliefs are mental representations and do not necessarily guide behaviour,⁵¹ there will on top of these guiding beliefs be many other beliefs that do not concern our desires nor guide our behaviour. We can call these other beliefs *adiaphora* (Noun, Plural, Greek for Indifferent).⁵² This is where we can divide worldview into core and non-core: the core contains only guiding beliefs, and the non-core contains the *adiaphora*. While both of these parts of a worldview are contained within an individual worldview, in distinguishing worldviews from each other we will here disregard these *adiaphora*. For the interpretationist this was never an issue since only action-guiding belief is classified as belief, for the representationalist on the other hand there exist many beliefs that are not action-guiding and thus not as easily classified and further not as informative of the individual we are examining. These *adiaphora* will for the representationalist still be part of the worldview, but when differentiating worldviews from each other we should stick to the core, for the simple reason that this is what is action guiding and thus reasonably what is most important for the individual when taking decisions. Moreover, only using cores when differentiating worldviews will make it easier to deal with fragmented and

⁵⁰ Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann and R J Hollingdale (New York, 1968).

⁵¹ Schwitzgebel, 'Belief'.

⁵² 'Adiaphora', *Wikipedia*, 2018 <<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Adiaphora&oldid=869113021>> [accessed 5 December 2018].

incoherent worldviews, because the method includes only the most important bits. This lesson we learn from almost all other worldview models and specifically De-Witt's IWF which I regard as the best so far. They all fall short because worldviews overlap in different ways for each individual, rendering a model that aspires to include all beliefs in the categorisation mostly unusable. The core-based method is instead less comprehensive and more concentrated, alleviating some of the problems that have arisen in earlier methods of differentiating worldviews.

Let's demonstrate this point with an example: Eric is Christian, his uttermost desire is to reach Heaven, and he acts in accordance with this ontological belief of his that heaven exists. This action-taking is the expression of his ethics. Eric's belief in heaven can thus be deemed a guiding belief, and we could say on that basis that it is part of his worldview. Next door to Eric lives his neighbour Jessica who is also a Christian. If we asked her, she would say that she too believes in heaven, but this is not what she acts upon. Rather, her uttermost desire is to attain riches in this world instead of a transcendent one. For her, although she might hold the ontological belief that heaven does exist, it does not seem very important, or at least not as important as another belief. Would we ask these two individuals of their ontological beliefs, then we would get the same answer from both even though these beliefs have differing outcomes in their lives. In the case of Eric, we have found a guiding belief, whereas for Jessica we have only an adiaphoron (or for the interpretationist not even a belief). Consequently, the question would not have helped us in distinguishing different beliefs in the two individuals. While the two of them might actually have similar beliefs, these beliefs vary in importance, which is what we must regard if we want to differentiate them.

If we instead regard their actions, we find that one is struggling with shares on the stock market and pushing her employees as hard as possible, while the other is trying to spread love and fairness. We would in this case regard two different tendencies that would have been harder to find using merely questioning. These tendencies lead us to their guiding beliefs and thus to their cores.

At this point we must take into account a third theory of belief, dispositionalism. The dispositionalists say that beliefs do indeed guide actions, but not necessarily always. According to Gilbert Ryle, the main proponent of dispositionalism, they are instead dispositions that activate when needed:

To say that a person knows something, or aspires to be something, is not to say that he is at a particular moment in process of doing or undergoing anything, but he is able to do certain things, when the need arises, or that he is prone to do and feel certain things in situations of certain sorts.⁵³

Accordingly, it would seem that there are beliefs that are held by the individual that we cannot always see, those that are activated in certain situations. However, as we have seen in earlier sections when we discuss worldviews it is only *paradigmatic* beliefs that we are concerned with. And how can a paradigmatic belief ever not be relevant? These beliefs relate by definition to our entire paradigm, not only some parts of it. Thus, a paradigmatic belief will always be pressing, since one's paradigm can never be escaped without changing the either the belief or the paradigm. This is not to say that all paradigmatic beliefs belong in the core, as we have seen in Jessica's belief in heaven which is paradigmatic yet still not part of the core. It may sound like a paradox, but a belief can indeed be pressing without being guiding. For the interpretationist, this is solved immediately by stating that it actually is not a belief. For the other two theories of belief on the other hand, we have uncovered a slight problem. I will not have time to delve deeper into this here, rather we could say that these beliefs do not provide motivational reasons towards actions. In the case of Jessica's belief in heaven, she might believe heaven exists but this does not necessarily require her to act towards it if it doesn't awake a desire within. Or we would have to say that she has either conflicting beliefs or conflicting desires, i.e. she wants to get to heaven, but her want of worldly riches is bigger and thus triumphs over other desires. Anyhow, what we will look at is the tendency of action, which will include only the beliefs that matter most. The parts of this tendency of action that we can determine as paradigmatic belong to the worldview, thus is the method.

To summarise the method, the worldview is the structure of paradigmatic beliefs that can be sorted into *guiding beliefs* and *adiaphora*. Those that are guiding are in the core of the worldview, and it is the core that we should use as a basis for the differentiation of worldviews. This core is what is embodied as tendencies of action within the life of the individual holding the worldview. Regarding tendencies of action to differentiate worldviews is thus what we should do. An example of the implementation of this core-based methodology is what follows in the next section.

⁵³ Gilbert Ryle 1900-1976, *The Concept of Mind* (Harmondsworth, 1949) P. 116.

Implementing the core-based methodology

In the previous chapter I have provided the theoretical background for the implementation of a new method of differentiating worldviews. We have swayed from trying to regard the entirety of worldviews to instead identifying cores. This allows us to focus more on the part of the worldview that holds the highest power of explanation, i.e. how best we can understand how people reach decisions. Although a worldview might indeed have to answer the questions stated in part one, this is not the way in which we should categorise and differentiate between worldviews. In order to reach a satisfying categorisation I have proposed that we instead regard tendencies of behaviour and the general direction of the life on an individual, which will lead us to the core.

Now, as a philosopher it seems I have successfully figured out a way to put myself out of business, because all work in the area henceforth would be referred to the sociological department. And yes, one way of going about to regard people's tendencies of action could be through a kind of sociological method. We would ask them how they spend their time, why they spend it as they do, what they want to achieve, etc. Indeed, this sounds a lot like Leontiev's method. This would however require a vast amount of work and quantifying of data and is therefore an impractical method, although perhaps precise.

As an alternative method, one could separate so to speak *ethical* or *axiological standards*; rules or guidelines that people live by that lead them in certain directions. Of course, people will not always act in accordance with their ethic, indeed they might not even ascribe to an ethic, but an ethic will still be telling of a way that people live, how they act and on what they base their decisions. Thus, they may lead us to the core of worldviews.

There are many such ethical standards, for example the Christian Ten Commandments, the four virtues of Plato or even the business ethic of *7 habits of highly effective people* named by Stephen Covey.⁵⁴ One could then try to find similarities and differences between them to put these different ethics into categories. This does not mean that for instance all Christians would be in the Christian ethical category, only those that followed its ethics primarily would. Furthermore, I want to point out here that this following model is simply one way of implementing the above theorised core-based methodology of worldviews. It is only a proposition, albeit the one I deem best and indeed

⁵⁴ Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* (La Vergne, 2016).

one that is effective in many ways. Anyway, I am still open to the possibility of other ways of categorisation based on the methodology.

A way of placing these ethical standards is with the *Purusartha* from the ancient Veda scriptures written in India. Rather than being a set of rules or one certain way to live, the *Purusartha* is an old naming of *the* four human aims.⁵⁵ In the Mahabharata where they are listed large claims are made:

As regards Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, what is found here may be found elsewhere, but what is not here will not be found elsewhere.⁵⁶

Clearly, this denotes that there exist no other human aims other than these. Whatever the truth value of this previous statement, these four should certainly be the most common ends people seek in their actions, although I am open to suggestions of further alternatives. They are in this way four different attempts at giving ultimate answers to Nietzsche's grand question "why?". For this reason, the *Purusartha* provides a perfect foundation for our investigation into what direction people take in their actions. The four aims are:⁵⁷

- Dharma: the way of righteousness; virtue; moral activity
- Artha: the striving towards empowerment; wealth; material well-being
- Kama: the pursuit of pleasure; fulfilment of desires; playfulness
- Moksha: the path of spiritual liberation or salvation

The curious reader will already have connoted these four aims with different ethical schools, such as Kama for Epicureanism. And accordingly, in my model I use the *Purusartha* only as template, connoting the different aims to other ethical schools and ideals instead of using Indian philosophy as my only source. The worldview model is thus not equal to the *Purusartha*, but merely based on it. Following, I provide further explanation into each of the aims and attempt to crystallise the cores.

⁵⁵ Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction*. P. 190.

⁵⁶ Arvind Sharma, 'The Puruṣārthas: An Axiological Exploration of Hinduism', *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 27/2 (1999), 223–56. P. 227.

⁵⁷ Louis Renou, *Hinduism* (New York; London, 1961) P. 54.; Hillary P. Rodrigues., *Introducing Hinduism*, Second (London; New York, 2017) P. 104-110; Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction* P. 186-190.

Dharma

Dharma is the way of moral living, the way of righteousness.⁵⁸ There may exist a vast array of different ways in which this way of life takes expression in the real world, but common for all of them is an attempt at taking moral and ethical action, i.e. doing the *good* thing.

I stated earlier that this is the path of virtue. And although virtue ethics is by no means the only ethical branch to possibly be placed in the category of Dharma, it may serve for pragmatic reasons as a good example that may give good explanation to this way of life. Let's take as an example Plato's four cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice.⁵⁹ Each virtue being sufficiently self-explanatory for the purpose of this exposition of Dharma, we can say of them all that they are guiding principles towards an ethical way of living. The point of them is that they represent a way of life that somebody (in this case Socrates) has decided to be the *good* way. They draw us away from our selfishness, our desires and pettiness and make us "focus more readily and more honestly on things other than the self".⁶⁰ Of course, what is *good* is clearly rather vague, but it is this aspiration towards the good that counts, which will be apparent when contrasted to the following worldviews. It is this path towards the good that signifies the Dharma-worldview, and thus is the core.

In Indian philosophy, Dharma together with Moksha is classified as a spiritual value, whereas the other two are called the material.⁶¹ This conforms well to the spirit/flesh dichotomy that has dominated in Christianity: Dharma and Moksha being more spiritual, and Artha and Kama leaning towards the flesh. It being spiritual, however, does not mean that it has to be religious or that it necessitates some kind of deity. Instead, this spirituality could be focused towards a secular spiritual value such as personal growth. An individual living the Dharma-worldview then, could have a deity as a core ontological belief, but she could equally be of material ontological belief and act as she does for other reasons, to reach *Eudaimonia* for example.

⁵⁸ Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction*. P. 186.

⁵⁹ Rachana Kamtekar, 'Ancient Virtue Ethics', in *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics* (Cambridge, 2013), 29–48. P. 29.

⁶⁰ Rosalind Hursthouse and Glen Pettigrove, 'Virtue Ethics', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2018 (2018) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/ethics-virtue/>> [accessed 13 December 2018].

⁶¹ Sharma, 'The Puruṣārthas: An Axiological Exploration of Hinduism', 223–56. P. 230.

Artha

The second worldview we arrive to is that of Artha. This is the way of life that aspires to wealth and power. These two might seem petty compared to the morality of Dharma, but there lies within Artha the very human striving towards worldly security. In Indian philosophy, there is in Artha no moral room for greed, rather this way of life promotes stability in the sphere of influence that the individual acts.⁶² In an archaic sense, the pursuer of Artha is skilled at a kind of village economics; promoting the acquiring of skills and habits that contribute to the material well-being of the group. This is clearly something we cannot do without. Nonetheless, we may note that the Artha can become skewed into nurturing greed and hoarding money for the ego. The Artha is thus in constant danger of becoming a Crassus, but if she is on her guard she doesn't have to pursue this greed.

Contrary to Indian philosophy, when we regard Artha as a worldview this exclusion of greed is unnecessary and is dispensed with. Those who are seen as greedy and are unscrupulous in their aspirations and ambitions are not excluded from Artha; they definitively fall into this category. There exists a clear rift between two different kinds of this worldview then, those with moral scruples closer to the Dharma way of life, and those with the pure pursuit of endless material success. In the former case, making a distinction between the actions of an individual with the worldview of Dharma and that of Artha could turn out difficult, since a Dharma too needs a certain degree of worldly security. As with all models of worldviews however, these are only ideals to which not many conform perfectly. As such, to be classified in between two worldviews is not an impossibility.

Relating to virtue ethics as with Dharma, this category has other virtues not as prominent in ancient philosophy, such as the Humean virtue industry together with frugality, diligence, perseverance etc.⁶³ Still, these virtues do not conform to the same ideals as does Dharma and should not be confused as such. If we let modern management literature such as *7 habits of highly effective people* by Covey and *Psychocybernetics, A New Way to Get More Living Out of Life* by Maxwell Maltz stand for Artha, we notice that these two are centred around the notion of personal success and

⁶² Sharma, 'The Puruṣārthas: An Axiological Exploration of Hinduism', 223–56. P. 238.

⁶³ Rachel Cohon, 'Hume's Moral Philosophy', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2018 (2018) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/hume-moral/>> [accessed 13 December 2018]; Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*. P. 108.

achievement rather than moral action.⁶⁴ This is not to say that these authors promote immoral action, only that moral action is not their chief aim, and not an aim in itself as it is in the Dharma-worldview. This notion is seen clearly in Covey, where moral action is encouraged in some sense, but only so as to lead the individual to personal success.⁶⁵ In any case, the aim of personal success does not need to be in any clear way tied to wealth or power, one could be a successful artist, scientist, politician or golf player. The point is that actions are carried out for the purpose of the *success*, and this success will vary between individuals. All the same, it is this striving towards success that is the core for this worldview. And here I try to use the word success in a very conventional way, i.e. in terms of fame, wealth or power, in contrast to for example Stoic success which would be entirely different. What these books do is they help the individual define this success and state ways of achieving this goal, improving certain skills and encouraging perseverance etc. For this reason they epitomise Artha quite well.

Kama

This is the path of pleasure, of fulfilling desires and of playful activity.⁶⁶ In Indian philosophy it is epitomised by the Kama Sutra which, as is commonly known, contains “illustrations detailing varieties of positions for sexual union”.⁶⁷ But the Kama Sutra is not in any way solely sexual. It also encourages its reader towards singing, dancing, arts, reading and reasoning, cooking, learning languages, etc.⁶⁸ From this we see that there are many ways of getting to the sought after pleasure, so this worldview too will like the others differ greatly between individuals. Common to them all though, is pleasure as the end goal, which we can therefore call the core.

Interestingly, reading and reasoning is also included into this worldview. Consequently, the curiosity of a scientist would fall into this category albeit vastly differing from some others in this worldview. This shows that not only aesthetical blindness as displayed in Kierkegaard’s *Either Or* but also Epicurean pleasure-seeking fits into this model.⁶⁹ Between the two, there is a vast rift. In it we see the difference between the hedonistic cocaine addict and the responsible Epicurean. In Kierkegaard’s aesthetical lifestyle, pleasure is sought wherever, whenever and by any means. To

⁶⁴ Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People : Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*; Maxwell Maltz, *Psycho-Cybernetics : A New Way to Get More Living out of Life* (United States, 1960).

⁶⁵ Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People : Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*.

⁶⁶ Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction*. P. 186.

⁶⁷ Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*. P. 107-108.

⁶⁸ Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*. P. 108.

⁶⁹ Kierkegaard, *Antingen - Eller*.

slake the thirsty desires there is no end which the person would not seek. He contrasts this to the awakening into an ethical life (equivalent to Dharma), where the individual is allegedly transformed and finally sees things as they truly are.⁷⁰ Conversely, what we see in Epicureanism is a way of seeking pleasure without this fanatical aestheticism. In this school, the participant is encouraged to avoid pain and be content with the small pleasures, emphasising the distinction between necessary and unnecessary desires.⁷¹ Accordingly, an example of a necessary desire is the need for food, whereas an unnecessary one is the need for food that tastes that good. For the Epicurean both are equally enjoyable, merely depending on what standards one holds. This way of the pleasure-seeking life can thus be done in a responsible, perhaps even virtuous way.

What is more, the awakening from the aesthetical lifestyle as Kierkegaard describes it does not necessarily have to lead to purely Dharma, but may equally lead to any of the other two worldviews or perhaps even an Epicurean Kama. Anyway, both Kierkegaard's aestheticism and Epicureanism belong into this category of worldview, which doesn't exclude that there are other examples as well, but it does show that this worldview of pleasure-seeking takes many different expressions.

Moksha

The path of Moksha is that of utter renunciation of all things worldly for the ultimate achievement of spiritual liberation.⁷² It is the path chosen by paradigmatic figures such as Buddha and Gandhi (towards the end of his life) together with various ascetics and mystics. As a worldview, this is so uncommon in the atheistic spheres of the western world that it may be difficult for many to relate to. In eastern cultures however, it is not entirely uncommon to renounce all attachments and wander around the world dressed in rags, sworn to never again be tied to the flesh.⁷³ Certain variations of Buddhism springs to mind in that respect. It is believed in these lines that all material attachments forces its subjects into ignorance, and that this ignorance must be dispelled and worked against to be able to see reality as it truly is. The ideal pursuer of Moksha, a true renouncer, should thus have been able to shame Diogenes the Cynic for being attached to the tub in which he lived, had they met.

⁷⁰ Kierkegaard, *Antingen - Eller*. P. 59.

⁷¹ 'Epicureanism', *Wikipedia*, 2018 <<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Epicureanism&oldid=867512061>> [accessed 7 November 2018].

⁷² Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*. P. 109.

⁷³ Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*. P. 109.

The ultimate goal for Moksha is “oneness and unity of all being”, and this can in Indian philosophy be achieved either on earth or eschatologically.⁷⁴ If we discuss this prospect in terms of perennial philosophy, it would be the same as achieving Nirvana, reaching Heaven or any similar concept alluding to an ontology of similar characteristic. Furthermore, as a worldly achievement it may entail reaching “total equanimity” in exactly as absolute terms as total means, signified by the person who retains his view of God and does not flinch even in the face of imminent and certain death.⁷⁵

As a worldview or way of life, on the other hand, such a sagely ideal is too stark to be a prerequisite. It is indeed only an ideal, a goal that the pursuer of Moksha aspires to reach. At any rate, it is still this ideal that signifies the core. Furthermore, Dharma can be a way to reach Moksha and thus the two possibly take similar expression in daily life. As worldview however, the ontological belief in God in its perennial sense is of highest importance, whereas this is no indispensable principle in Dharma. Here is a prime difference between Moksha and all the other worldviews, and it is therefore difficult to imagine this worldview in any kind of secular version.

Before we proceed to the discussion, I would like to say that in practice these four worldviews are not mutually exclusive. One person may ascribe to two worldviews, or be in between two of them. This is not an impossibility, because as we know from earlier models, worldviews are incoherent and fragmented, opening up for interesting and unforeseen combinations.

Discussion

One main issue with regarding tendencies of action to get to a worldview is the many instances where people act, quite deliberately in some cases, directly against their rationality: akratic action, procrastination and giving into temptations are just a few of these. And how do we measure the tendency of action of a procrastinated life, when trying to figure out the worldview? If we only regarded embodied action, we would see someone lying on the sofa ninety per cent of the time, and doing what he deems meaningful the last ten per cent, or doing what he is obliged to do those last ten per cent. In this extreme case, the method would almost certainly fail. In most cases however, where procrastination and akratic action is fairly low or on a moderate level, we should

⁷⁴ Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction*. Pp. 113, 114.

⁷⁵ Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction*. P 114.

be able to regard a direction that the life of the subject is taking. This will be the tendency we want to find, however swaying and erratic it may seem.

Another interesting consequence of this model is its complete lack of taking into question cultural and technological factors. In this model, the average Joe of the American Midwest in the 1970's could have the same worldview as a 15th century Japanese Samurai. At first glance, this makes for a rather poor model for distinguishing worldviews since one might reasonably assume that there are vast differences between these two individuals. Yet, this does not have to be the case, as stated in the critique of Bråkenhielm. If we want the worldview to mean *how* we see the world, this would mean that the concept should not take into questions on *what* we see. By this I mean that the worldview handles the way in which our subject navigates the world, not which world she navigates. This eliminates the need to investigate culture in order to find out the worldview of a subject. We could assume, however, that many of the same culture will hold the same worldview since these people influence each other.

The questions remains, though: should the worldview be affected by cultural and technological structures? So far, it might not be necessary, but still contributive. However, if we disregard different clothing, looks and the fact the one of them takes a car to work where he manufactures goods, and the other travels by horse and wagon to his daily ploughing of orchards amongst other shallow parameters, we may arrive at the possibility that these are actually two quite similar men. *How* they go about their days will still be categorised in the above model, and it will likely fall into some kind of human pursuit. With this model, we would say that all these cultural and technological structures are simply *what* the subject regards, and should only affect the worldview to a limited degree or not at all. In the end, it all comes down to what belongs to the core and what doesn't, and it is only the most important beliefs that do belong. Thus, there may exist worldviews that are essentially contingent on their cultural and technological context, but not in this model. I have instead focused on human pursuits that span over all of humanity because it widens the scope of the model.

If cultural and technological parameters are to be included, such a categorisation could be inserted as subcategories to the four worldviews of this model. These four would in that case be four *types* of worldviews, with the actual worldviews ordinated under one of these types. One would then be able to speak of for instance the Dharma-worldview of 19th-century Britain, or the Kama-

worldview of the time of the Roman Empire. Indeed, other types of subcategories may as well be allowed into this model, if one wants to expand it so as to make it more exact. While I would welcome such an endeavour, I have had to disregard it in preference of other things to include.

I want to make clear the implications of this new model of worldview with a couple more examples. Although perhaps arbitrary and easy, religious wars are perfect examples. One might say that a religious or cultural war is a “clash of worldviews”. But with this model it isn’t, and rightly so. Because here, they would not be fighting over the correctness of one God over another, even if they both say this is the reason they fight. No, they both fight to win power over the other, and indeed this could probably be said of any war in history. Both sides will almost certainly be of the Artha-worldview, or at least the invader which might be able to force Kama and Dharma to fight for themselves. This can quite easily be assumed from the model, since killing others to increase one’s power is despicable in Dharma or Moksha, and doesn’t make sense to the pleasure-seeking Kama-worldview for the simple reason that it is presumably quite unpleasant to fight in a war. We would consequently find in a religious war that both sides are actually quite similar to each other in that they both want more power. That one side fights with a cross on their armour and the other with a moon is simply what one could call culture. Thus, to say that this war is the Muslim worldview against the Christian makes less sense than to say that it is about two groups of people wanting power over each other, with a lot of bystanders just wanting the war to end.

This example can be applied in a more controversial way on two debating scientists. If they clash, they are almost certainly both Artha, because they are both debating not over the truth, but over their power over the truth. They are fighting not to get to what is correct, but over who is to be the one that is correct. One could speculate as to the only reason that one has the left standpoint and the other has the right is cultural difference, and thus we could switch their places and they would still fight. They will never agree unless in a way that gives them equal power, or if one concedes and accepts the loss. On the other hand, if they are both Kama, they would only debate if they deem it enjoyable. Whether one is right or wrong is less important since they do not value the power over the truth as highest, rather they value the enjoyment of the debate and the progress of science. Consequently, admitting to being wrong shouldn’t be such big a problem for the Kama as it is for the Artha, since it is not seen as a loss. It would rather be seen as a loss if the debate turned sour, unpleasant or simply boring. Furthermore, two scientists of ideal Dharma-worldview should in

theory, given enough time and that they deemed it worthy to even debate, come to an agreement. This for the reason that they value the *good* primarily and this is their truth. Whatever is debated about is secondary to this truth that they both already agree on. This last is clearly based on the presupposition that there is a *good* or a common sense that transcends culture, something which may not be too unreasonable. Lastly, I fail to see how a scientist with a Moksha-worldview would have any reason to even debate, but I am open to suggestions on how such a scenario would play out.

So, what have we gained and what have we lost with this method of analysis? Clearly, the representationist may argue that there are many aspects to a worldview that we have lost completely by applying this method. Be that as it may, all methods will have their costs and benefits, and we have with this method had to make a trade-off. By focusing on the core we may lose some aspects of a worldview, but we gain a clearer view of each. However, I would be open to the possibility of combining the core-based methodology of regarding tendencies of action with a question-based methodology.

There might also arise problems if we want compare one certain aspect of two different worldviews, since each worldview is not measured with the same questions. For instance, if we want to compare ontological beliefs between Moksha and Kama, we would run into difficulties because the ontological belief of Kama is not clearly defined. In that case I would recommend using another model, because this one is not omni-applicable.

In contrast to these costs, one major benefit of this model is that it is applicable on all cultures of all times. Moreover, the model and method are closely connected to how the worldview takes expression in people's actual lives. This opens up for people to be able to compare their own way of life to others through this model, which would have been more difficult earlier.

Lastly, we have done justice to the purpose of this essay by creating a method that aims at increasing explanatory power when categorising worldviews. This we have done by looking at the core of the worldview, which in turn has eased the differentiation process. Furthermore, we have subsequently implemented this method into a model that highlights the core for each worldview. These both endeavours have at least led us on the path towards solving the problem of categorising worldviews.

Summary

In this essay I have addressed the problem that there is not yet a decisive way to categorise and differentiate between worldviews. We have gone through different worldview models only to see that they fall short by a failure of method. A solution to this problem has been presented with the core-based methodology, which focuses on the essentials of each worldview. It does so by taking into account primarily tendencies of action of the individual on the basis that this leads us to belief. Subsequently, a worldview model has been developed based on the core-based methodology. Drawn from ancient Indian philosophy, the model divides worldviews into that of Virtue; Pleasure-seeking; Empowerment; and God. All of this is done for the purpose of increasing our understanding on what people believe and what decisions they reach.

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