



Figure 12.1

Humanity, the Higher, and the World.

within Australian indigenous cultures), within a *wholeness*. Because there is very little distance between humanity and the world, there is no room for Socratic questioning, as that is based on divisions (Ford 2007). The Indian/Tibetan tradition (2) positions humanity and the world as having *layers* of consciousness. The goal of a human life then becomes to attain clearer consciousness and ultimately a complete connection in harmony with the world. The Chinese/Japanese tradition (3) also seeks harmony with the world, but in a different way: it sees the world as the dynamic operation of opposite forces (like yin-yang), where the attainment of *balance* is a key goal. The revelation religions (4) of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism see the connection with the Higher in the connection to a single God that can be addressed (prayed to) directly. In this way of thinking, humans are separated from God—the relationship with God and the world is a *transactional* one, in which prayer and morally good behavior are rewarded by God's love and a place in heaven. In Western scientific thought (5), the existence of the Higher is seen as a question of personal preference, and humanity is separated from the world. The world is a