

APPENDIX 4: INSPIRATION

One of the inspiring features of frame creation is the fact that such an open approach uses the breadth of human qualities of individuals in organizations (see chapter 8). It has this capability because its deeper structure is built on an understanding of the repertoire of human approaches to the world, as it is structured in different cultures.

Various philosophers have ventured to approach the difference in cultures by delving into their “great books,” anthropological studies, and literature to achieve a deeper understanding of the underlying drivers of a culture. Here we will use the framework presented by Mulder (1997) based on the work of Henri van Praag (1916–1988). Van Praag concludes that cultures generally fall into five fundamentally different value systems that he calls the “cultural codes”: (1) shamanic, (2) Indian/Tibetan, (3) Chinese/Japanese, (4) revelation religions, and (5) Western scientific thought. Each of the five cultural codes in this typology represents a completely different set of values and a different orientation, a different way of giving meaning to the world and to human existence within it (Ford 2007). We will not be dealing here with the truth claims that are associated with these ways of making sense of the world; we will just be taking them as the basis for the metaphors people in the respective cultures tend to live by (Lakoff 1987).

Van Praag uses a simple figure (see figure 12.1) to outline the “settings” of the key relationships between Humanity, the Higher, and the World in these five different cultural codes. In general, the relationship between Humanity and the Higher is “belief,” the relationship between the Higher and the World is “creation,” and the relationship between Humanity and the World is “culture.”

However, the shamanic tradition (1) makes none of these hard distinction between Humanity, the World, and the Higher that Western thinkers are used to. Life takes place in a state of constant creation (see the notion of “songlines”