

good is up; bad is down
 “Things are looking *up*”
 “Well, this is an all-time *low*”

happy is up; sad is down
 “My spirits are *up*”
 “He’s feeling *down*”

virtue is up; depravity is down
 “She has *high* standards”
 “I wouldn’t *stoop* that *low*”

control is up; subjugation is down
 “She’s in a *superior* role”
 “They are *under* my control”

Another very basic image schema that research suggests develops intuitively in preverbal infant cognition is the CONTAINER schema (Mandler 1992; Tilford 2017, 17–23), which leads to the widespread conceptual metaphor THE BODY IS A CONTAINER. According to this metaphor, the skin functions as a boundary to keep everything inside on the inside, and everything outside on the outside. As we will see in the next chapter, this conceptual metaphor leads intuitively to the perception that the self is contained inside the body (and most commonly located in the area of the head, the chest, or the abdomen). With this understanding of the relationship of conceptual metaphors to cognition, we can more confidently reconstruct some of the intuitions, assumptions, and foundations of thought that were likely held by ancient writers about the person, about the world, and about the former’s place within the latter. This will be particularly relevant to the discussion of personhood in the first chapter.

Prototype theory is another important framework that will inform this book’s engagement with conceptual categories (Rosch 1973, 1975; Lakoff 1987a; Taylor 2003; Geeraerts 2006). According to this theory, the human mind does not intuitively learn or use categories according to the classical Aristotelian approach of a binary set of necessary and sufficient features (the foundational approach of most dictionaries).³⁴ That is a distorting framework. Experimental data indicate that conceptual categories are not strictly binary, but can be internally graded—that is, there are “better” and “worse” members of a category—and tend to lack

³⁴ John Taylor provides a summary of the Aristotelian method of categorization, and he identifies four basic assumptions inherent to it: (1) “Categories are defined in terms of a conjunction of necessary and sufficient features,” (2) “Features are binary,” (3) “Categories have clear boundaries,” and (4) “All members of a category have equal status” (Taylor 2003, 21–22).