Edward Slingerland

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Thinking with the Body: Somatic Marking and Blending Jujitsu in Early

Edward Slingerland
University of British Columbia
Conceptual metaphor theory

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson
Source → Target Mapping

Morality as Accounting (Rights as I.O.U’s)

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Blend: Digging a Financial Grave

Subject as both gravedigger and potential financial corpse

The deeper the grave, closer to death

Gravedigger not aware he is causing own death

Completion of grave causes death

Financial death

Person as decision-maker and sufferer of consequences

Accumulation of (bad) financial decisions

Person unaware of consequences

Decisions cause failure

Financial failure

Gravedigging

Gravedigger

Corpse

Accumulative shovelfuls of earth lead to completion of grave

Death

Unwitting Financial Failure
Blend: Digging a Financial Grave

Subject as both gravedigger and potential financial corpse

The deeper the grave, closer to death

Gravedigger not aware he is causing own death

Completion of grave causes death

Financial death

Accumulative shovelfuls of earth lead to deeper grave

Death and Dying

Gravedigger

Corpse

Unwitting Financial Failure

Person as decision-maker and sufferer of consequences

Accumulation of (bad) financial decisions

Person unaware of consequences

Decisions cause failure

Financial failure

Death

Digging a Financial Grave (normative implications)
Metaphors/Blends and Politics

— — —, *Don’t Think of an Elephant!* (2004)


The *Mencius*

4th century BCE Confucian text

Points:

• see how he’s using blending to recruit somatic markers in moral debate
• see how blends get built up and altered during the course of a conversation
• (interesting general) get a short intro to Mencius’ emotion-based ethics
Mohism

ethics based on:
• logical argumentation
• conscious adherence to “impartial caring”
• repression of natural, selfish tendencies
• strongly “voluntaristic”
Gaozi said, “Human nature is like the qi 枕 willow. Morality is like cups and bowls. To make morality (renyi 仁義) out of human nature is like making cups and bowls out of the willow tree.”
Blend: Moral Education as Carving

Human nature as raw material
(no telos, crude)

Subject as artisan (exerts force)

Doctrines as tool (determines shape)

Education as Carving (changes human nature)

Moral person as artifact (beautiful)
("refined", no resemblance to "crude" nature): [care for all equally]

Mencius 6:A:1 Gaozi’s initial blend

Craft Production

Raw material (crude)
(no proper shape or direction)

Artisan (determines shape)

Cutting tool

Carving (changes shape)

Moral Education

Human nature (selfish)

Subject (person)

Moral doctrines [“impartial caring”] (guides education process)

Process of education
Mencius replied, “Can you follow (shun 順; lit. flow with) the nature of the willow in making your cups and bowls? Or is it in fact the case that you will have to mutilate (qiang’zei 截截) the willow before you can make it into cups and bowls? If you have to mutilate the willow to make it into cups and bowls, must you then also mutilate people to make them moral? Misleading the people of the world into bringing disaster upon morality—surely this describes the effects of your teaching!”
Mencius 6:A:1 Mencius’s response

Craft Production

- Raw material (no shape or direction)
- Artisan (determines shape)
- Tool
- Carving (changes shape)
- Cups, Bowls (no resemblance to raw material)

Living Thing

- Living thing (has natural telos)
- Mutilator (Person) (harms living thing)
- Weapon (cuts, harms)
- Process of Mutilation (deforms)
- Living thing mutilated (does not resemble natural self)

Water

- Has natural direction (flows down) [6:B:2]
- Going against flow difficult, leads to disaster [cf. 6:B:11]

Human nature has natural telos

Mohist Educator as Mutilator (harms human nature)

Tool-Doctrine as Weapon (cuts, harms)

Mohist Education as Mutilation (deforms human nature, leads to disaster)

Mohist “moral person” as cripple (no longer resembles natural self)

Blend: Mohist Moral Education
Gaozi said, “Human nature is like a whirlpool. Cut a channel to the east and it will flow east; cut a channel to the west and will flow west. The lack of a tendency toward good or bad in human nature is just like water’s lack of a preference for east or west.”
Mencius 6:A:2 Gaozi’s initial blend

Blend: Moral Education as Channeling

Human nature is morally
\textit{directionless}

Subject (or Teacher) \textit{wisely} decides
upon the moral “direction”

Human nature moves in whatever
“direction” given to it
(now \textit{useful, purposeful})

Irrigation Management

Whirling pond water
\textit{(directionless)}

Irrigation manager
\textit{(wise, determines direction)}

Direction of flow after cut
(now \textit{useful, purposeful})

Human Beings

Human nature (self)

Subject (or Teacher)

Type of Behavior
\textit{(good, bad)}
Mencius replied, “Water certainly does not distinguish between east or west, but does it fail to distinguish between up and down? The goodness of human nature is like the downhill movement of water—there is no person who is not good, just as there is no water that does not flow downward.

“Now, as for water, if you strike it with your hand and cause it to splash up, you can make it go above your forehead; if you apply force and pump it, you can make it go uphill. Is this really the nature of water, though? No, it is merely the result of environmental influences (shizeran 勢則然). That a person can be made bad shows that his nature can also be altered like this.”
**Mencius 6:A:2 Mencius’s response**

Blend: Moral development

- Human nature has *natural* ("internal") direction (good)
- Environment can force it to be *unnatural* (bad)
- Bad behavior is *unnatural, unsustainable*

Irrigation Management

- Water’s “nature” (*naturally* "internally" flows downhill)
- Direction of Flow (up, down)
- Irrigation manager ("external" force) can force water uphill
- Uphill flow *unnatural*

Human Beings (w/ Essence)

- Human nature (self)
- Type of Behavior (good, bad)
- Environmental "outside" influences
- External influences are *unnatural*
Mencius’s own position

Plant-Water blend ("root," "sprouts," "source," "flow"):

→ natural
→ morality from Inside (Essence), not Outside (Incidental)
→ Heaven-given
→ gradual, step-wise
→ non-coercive
→ working with natural world and deriving power from it
→ some effort, but not too much (nature doing much of the work)
→ still hierarchical (General, Water Manager, Farmer need to guide)

→ [important against Daoists: wild or primitive nature]
“Rare are those in the world who can refrain from trying to help their sprouts to grow. Then there are those who think that there is nothing they can do to help and therefore abandon all effort entirely. They are the people who fail to weed their sprouts. Those who try to help along the growth are the ‘sprout-pullers.’ Not only do their efforts fail to help, they actually do positive harm.”
Forthcoming Nov 2007

What Science Offers the Humanities
Integrating Body & Culture

Cambridge University Press