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Mind, Body, and Metaphor in Ancient Greek Concepts of Emotion
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Metaphor plays a central role in the formation of emotional concepts, as indeed in the formation of concepts in general. Typically, this is a matter of mapping the concrete onto the abstract and the physical onto the psychological. To that extent, a culture’s emotional categories are experiential, based on the interaction of embodied human beings with their environments via metonymies and metaphors that derive from such experience. The properties of emotions so conceived are not objectively given, but felt; they depend not just on objective processes in the body, the brain, and the world, but on the representation of the phenomenology of such processes in the intersubjective system that is language. To the extent that they are informed by metaphors and metonymies drawn from the phenomenology of the emotions in question, the relevant emotional concepts are constrained by physical embodiment and a shared external reality, but they are also variable. Though they exist in the shared and intersubjective system of language, their valence and salience will doubtless vary, at least to some extent, from one individual to another; they will certainly vary from one linguistic community to another. Accordingly, though the study of emotional metaphor requires considerable focus on features that are shared among cultures and periods, this is an enterprise with a substantial comparative and historical aspect. Even where universal or at least widely shared features and mechanisms are deployed, we need to pay the closest attention to the particularity of the concept in its historical and cultural context, and to be sensitive to variation through time and among cultures.

In this paper, I look at two examples that will, I hope, illustrate both the universal and the particular in the use of emotion-metaphor in ancient Greece. These represent, in my view, two of the more interesting cases, and they will help to show something of the spectrum of emotion-metaphor, one example being based on an involuntary physical symptom, and the other on the symbolic representation of emotion through dress. As already noted, however, these cases exist against a background in which metaphor is all-pervasive in the construction of emotional concepts; for constraints of space, this is a background on which the present paper will need to remain more or less silent.

Phrikê

My first example is phrikê. Phrikê as we shall see, can be the name of an emotion, but its primary significance lies in its reference to a physical symptom that is common to a range of emotional and non-emotional events, namely the phenomenon of piloerection (‘goose pimples’), shivering, or shuddering. Phrikê is an experience of an animal, but what the application of the term pinpoints is the visible aspect of that experience in the eyes of others. When this term is applied to an emotional experience, what we are dealing with is (in the strict sense) the phenomenology of emotion, i.e. the shared, third-person perspective that we all have (notwithstanding the standard philosophical puzzles about the communicability of qualia) of what it is like to experience the emotion in the first person. To be sure, phrikê is a subjective experience, but it is a subjective experience with an external, visible aspect, and it is this external, visible aspect that allows us to relate that person’s visible shudder, via the implicit theory of mind that we develop from infancy, to our own subjective experience of shuddering and of the emotions of which shuddering is a symptom.

Phrikê thus belongs, in its primary sense, to the basic somatic level of emotion. Sources such as the Hippocratic corpus, other medical writings, and the collections of Problematas attributed to Aristotle and Alexander of Aphrodisias all give ample evidence of its basic somatic aspect. These sources are well-nigh unanimous in relating phrikê and its cognates to bodily temperature: we shiver when we are cold, and when we shudder or shiver in other circumstances (e.g. when we are afraid, when we are suffering from various physical
ailments, when we sneeze, when we urinate, after eating, etc.) variations in bodily temperature are normally also implicated. The link between shuddering/shivering and piloerection is frequently noted, and this can in turn provide a cue for comment on the occurrence of phrikê also in non-human animals, both in circumstances which we should describe as emotional and in other, non-emotional scenarios. Phrikê, therefore, is an involuntary bodily movement, one that is part of human beings’ pre-human inheritance and rooted in basic systems of bodily regulation that respond to changes in the temperature of the organism and of the environment.

As a physical symptom, the phenomenon that phrikê names is an undeniable fact of human and non-human physiology and symptomology. As a symptom of emotion, and especially of fear-like emotions, it is a member of a set of related symptoms that are also recognized in our own folk models (‘I shudder to think’, ‘it gives me the shivers’, ‘he was in a cold sweat’, ‘she’s got cold feet’, ‘it was a chilling/hair-raising experience’), and confirmed by empirical investigation. The fact that phrikê is a symptom of fear and similar emotions in Greek is an important one, for the same symptom remains an important sign of such emotions and an important aspect of the concept of those emotions in English and other modern languages. This simple point is often minimized by those who would write the history of emotion: there are substantial aspects of emotional experience that depend on the biological heritage of our species and are deeply rooted in basic mechanisms of bodily regulation that human beings share with other animals. Where such aspects are prominent in cultures’ concepts of emotion we cannot expect the history of those concepts or the history of emotion itself to be one of unconstrained conceptual and cultural variation; change, development, or transformation will be, at least to some extent, constrained by physical embodiment.

If this point is recognized at all by social constructionist theorists of emotion, it is normally dismissed as trivial or uninteresting. Attention to emotions’ physical symptoms is typically stigmatized as reductionist and condemned for underestimating the crucial role in the conceptualization of emotion of the evaluative, linguistic, social, and cultural aspects of emotional experience and concepts. But this is a false antithesis. In the language of emotion, it is typical for the physical symptom to be used as a metonym for the emotion with which it is associated. A large number of passages illustrate this with reference to phrikê in Greek, but the phenomenon is at its clearest when the verb phrissein, ‘to shudder’, governs a direct object in the same way as would a verb meaning ‘to fear’. Thus, in a famous passage, Helen contrasts the kindness of Hector with the horror that she occasions in the other Trojans (Iliad 24. 774-5):

For I no longer have anyone else in broad Troy who is gentle or kind – all the others shudder at me.

The fact that the verb phrissein in such locutions stands for a verb of fearing is particularly clear in Euripides’ Hippolytus (415-18), where Phaedra expresses her incredulity that an adulteress should be able to conceal her guilty conscience from her husband:

How, oh Cyprian [sc. Aphrodite], mistress of the deep, can they look their husbands in the face and not shudder at the darkness, their partner in crime, or at the timbers of the house, lest they at some stage speak?

The fact that the verb phrissein is followed not only by a direct object, but also by a noun clause of the sort that regularly specifies the propositional content of a verb of fearing indicates that ‘shudder’ here is a simple metonymy for ‘fear’; shudders as such have no propositional content. Where a symptom of emotion such as phrikê is established as a metonym for the emotion itself, the term is then implicated in a wider network of emotional imagery, in two ways: first, like any other emotional term, the metonym attracts the standard sorts of metaphor in which emotional concepts are expressed; second, the metonym exists in relation to other terms that reflect the same aspect of the relevant emotion as it does. The simple ‘container metaphor’ by which emotions and other psychological experiences are (e.g.) ‘in’ us or we are ‘full of’ them is a fundamental way in which human beings think of mental events in terms of embodied experience. This ‘ontological metaphor’ which turns emotions into entities or
substances is equally fundamental to the conduit metaphor, in which the emotion is conveyed from one person to another. Also related, and basic to the view of emotions as (by and large) phenomenologically passive experiences, is the metaphor of emotion as an antagonist or external force – as an entity that ‘seizes’ or ‘holds’ a person, or as something that ‘comes over’ or ‘comes upon’ us from outside.

In addition, the experiential network in which phrikê belongs (in which phrikê-type emotions are typified by the lowered body temperature, shivering, and piloerection that are their physical symptoms) encompasses a range of other terms which express complementary aspects of the same imagery. Thus Helen, before whom the Trojans phrissein at Iliad 24. 775 is described as ‘chilling’ (rhigedanê) at 19. 325: the metonymy naturally encompasses both patient and object – Helen is ‘chilling’ and she makes the Trojans ‘shiver’. The verbs rhigein and rhigoun (cognate with Latin frigus), when they are not used literally of physical temperature, participate in this network mainly in the description of emotional symptoms, although rhigein is regularly used as a metonym for the emotion itself. The comparative adjective rhigion appears to be almost exclusively metaphorical, used of unpleasant eventualities and states of affairs that occasion fear and similar emotions in those who encounter or contemplate them; the superlative rhigistos and other derivative adjectives can also be used in a similar sense.

The implications of all this for the cross-cultural study of emotion are considerable. The importance of emotional symptoms in the construction of emotional concepts underlines the fundamental importance of physical embodiment in the concept of emotion itself. In the case of phrikê, the symptom is one that has its roots in basic somatic mechanisms of temperature regulation, that is manifested in a range of non-emotional contexts, and that is shared with other animals. From these materials, universal in humans and extending beyond the human species, is constructed a concept of (a kind of) fear in which physical symptoms are intimately related to cognitive appraisals and evaluations. The mechanism by which this occurs is the universal one of metonymy, by which the name of the symptom comes to function as a name of the emotion. This metonymy is then enmeshed in the wider network of emotional metaphor that is, again, a feature of the conceptualization of emotion in all cultures and languages known to me. At all these levels, the concept of phrikê is typical in locating the language and thought of emotion in embodied physical experience. There is nothing in any way surprising or unfamiliar about this – the point is precisely that ancient Greek emotional concepts are, to large extent, built up out of the same materials as our own, materials that draw on our experience as physically embodied beings interacting with our physical and social environments. What needs to be emphasized, however, is that this experiential, embodied nature of emotion is not just an aspect of a shared biological substratum; it is a feature also of language and of thought. It is not that embodiment is relevant only in terms of emotions’ physical changes, symptoms, and expressions and is left behind when emotional concepts take root in language, thought, and culture. There is no disjunction, but rather a fundamental continuity between emotions as physical experiences and emotional concepts as linguistic and cultural categories. In terms of the development of emotional concepts, there is no wedge to be driven between the body, on the one hand, and language and culture on the other. In the field of classical studies, at least, linguistic and literary studies of emotion have tended to concentrate exclusively on the sense and reference of the terms that label emotional experiences and scenarios. Unsurprisingly, they have found that cultures label emotions in different ways; the emotional labels of one culture are often not coextensive in reference with those of others; emotional scenarios that are labelled in one culture may go unlabelled, ‘hypocognized’, or even unrecognized in another. But there is much more to the language of emotion than this. Attention to aspects of emotion language beyond the semantics of emotion terms not only reinstates the role of embodied experience but provides better evidence of a culture’s phenomenology of emotion, getting us as close as we can get to a culture’s attempt to encapsulate the subjective experience of emotion in language.
In the larger project from which this paper derives, the next step in the argument involves the investigation of the particular connotations, associations, and applications of *phrikê* that superimpose layers of contextual and cultural specificity on the basic physical and conceptual infrastructure. Here, I can do no more than state the existence and importance of these. \(^{23}\)

In general, most of the more specific associations of *phrikê* derive from its fundamental nature as an instinctive, automatic, and physical response, especially to sudden visual and auditory stimuli. Though many of the relevant passages include a reference to the ominous connotations or negative import of the sights or sounds in question, it is also clear that in many cases the adjective highlights the capacity of the stimulus in itself to elicit an instinctive emotional response. Plutarch, for example, refers to the deep and horrific roar, the low and terrible tone, a mixture of bestial roaring and the clap of thunder, produced by the Parthians’ percussion instruments as they face the Romans in battle, commenting that the Parthians have clearly understood the impact of such sounds on the emotions and morale of their opponents (*Crassus* 23. 8-9). \(^{23}\)

There are two major contexts in which associations of this sort take on a particular cultural significance. One is religion, where *phrikê* appears as an instinctive response to sights and sounds of a numinous or supernatural nature. \(^{24}\) This makes it an especially appropriate response to epiphany, presumed epiphany, quasi-epiphany, or other presumed signs of divine presence. \(^{25}\) These associations, for example, are key to a passage in Plutarch’s *Life of Aratus* (32. 1-2). The Aetolians have attacked and overcome the Achaean city of Pellene, but in the very moment of their victory Aratus, the Achaean general, attacks, the tide turns, and the Aetolians themselves are routed. According to one tradition narrated by Plutarch, a crucial factor in these events was the appearance of a female Achaean captive, the daughter of Epigethes, on the city walls. Captured by an Aetolian officer, she had been placed in the sanctuary of Artemis, the victor’s helmet on her head for ease of identification. ‘Conspicuous for her beauty and physical stature’ as the woman was (32. 1), she is regarded by the Achaeans as ‘a sight of more than human majesty’ (32. 2), but taken by the Aetolian enemy to be a divine epiphany, so that they are overcome by *phrikê* and wonder (or amazement, *thambos*), and unable to defend themselves (32. 2). \(^{26}\) *Thambos* is a term that designates an emotion as such, and this in itself helps indicate that in this passage the label *phrikê* likewise functions as the name of an emotion rather than merely of an emotion symptom. Its use is not primarily intended to draw attention to the bodily changes experienced by the Aetolians in reaction to the sudden appearance of Epigethes’ daughter; if physical shuddering is relevant at all, it is not as such, i.e. as a simple, visible, bodily reaction, but as a sign of a more inclusive emotional experience, one that involves perception, an evaluation of that perception, cultural norms (in this case, specific concepts of divinity and of the possible modes of interaction between human and divine), and a characteristic pattern of behaviour. *Phrikê* refers not to one very limited aspect of that experience, the physical shudder that is a symptom of fear or something like it, but to the total experience. In this religious application, we see the importance of the term’s fundamental association with immediate sensory stimuli: it is an object of sight that excites the Aetolians’ *phrikê* (τοῖς πολεμίοις φάσμα θεῖον ὁρᾶν δοκοῦσι φρίκην ἐνέβαλε καὶ θάμβος, ‘she caused φρίκη and θάμβος in the enemy, who imagined they were seeing a divine epiphany’, *Aratus* 32. 2). \(^{27}\)

For the same reasons, *phrikê* is especially at home in the context of mystic initiation, a highly structured and stage-managed ritual process that dramatizes the initiand’s journey from darkness and light, involving special effects, costumes, and props. The *locus classicus* on the phenomenology of the initiand’s experience is the celebrated fragment of Plutarch’s *On the Soul*, fr. 178 Sandbach, in which the immortal soul’s experience of death is compared extensively to that of initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries, a process which itself no doubt mirrors or represents the journey of the initiate’s soul after death. Here, *phrikê* belongs to the stage prior to initiation, in which the initiand is subjected to the darkness and disorientation that are preliminary to the illumination to follow.\(^{28}\)
At first there are wanderings, wearisome running around, and inconclusive, anxious journeys through the darkness; then, before the consummation itself, all the terrors—phrikê, trembling, sweating, and amazement (thambos). But after that one encounters a kind of miraculous light, and is welcomed by pure, open places and meadows, with voices and dancing and the awe-inspiring majesty of sacred sounds and holy visions...

There can be no doubt that the arousal of emotions such as phrikê, spontaneous and authentic as they may be in each individual’s case, is a deliberate aim of the initiatory process as social drama. As a response to the sanctity, solemnity, and power of the ritual, the link between phrikê and the mysteries is attested throughout antiquity and beyond.29

The other main area in which I should emphasize phrikê’s cultural specificity in that of aesthetics. Aristotle uses the term only once in the Poetics, but this in itself is significant (Poetics 14, 1453b3-7):

The plot ought to be so composed that, even without seeing a performance, one who merely hears what happens will shudder (phrissein) and feel pity as a result of the events—as indeed one would on hearing the plot of the Oedipus.

The regular association between phrikê and the visual suggests that Aristotle choses the verb phrissein over, say, the regular but less colourful verb, ‘to be afraid’ (phobeisthai) precisely because the topic is the relative power of spectacle. It is uncontroversial that spectacle can produce phrikê, but Aristotle wants to insist that even this quintessentially instinctive response is better produced by means of the plot, for which performance is unnecessary. Aristotle was not the first to give phrikê a role in poetics. Part of the case advanced by the fifth-century sophist, Gorgias, for the proposition that Helen of Troy is innocent of any blame involves the argument that persuasive speech is irresistible (Helen 8-14), and the prime example of such speech is poetry (9). Like Aristotle, Gorgias is concerned with an audience’s emotional engagement with the changing fortunes of others; his core emotional responses are Aristotle’s pity and fear; and he emphasizes the power of these emotions with reference to physical symptoms and expressions (tears and phrikê). In the wider context, Gorgias does emphasize the compulsive emotional power of spectacle (Helen 15-19), but phrikê in §9 is an experience of auditors, not spectators, and its cause is speech, not spectacle. Both Gorgias and Aristotle are drawing on the implicit poetics of earlier, pre-dramatic poetry, on phenomena that become theorized in terms of phantasia (‘imagination’, i.e. the formation of mental images) and enargeia (‘vividness’, a key term of ancient literary and rhetorical criticism, a prized quality of narratives of various sorts, and thus an aspiration of wordsmiths throughout antiquity). Phrikê thus recurs as a response of internal audiences in both dramatic scripts and non-dramatic narratives from fifth-century tragedy to Roman Imperial biography and historiography.30

Though typically a symptom of fear, horror, or revulsion, it can be an expression of that link between these emotions and the shared sense of vulnerability that gives rise to pity. Its nature as an involuntary, instinctive response especially to immediate sensory stimuli, together with its fundamentally somatic character, helps us to put some phenomenological flesh on the bare bones of ‘pity and fear’ as the typical ‘tragic’ emotions. Its immediacy, in turn, and especially its association with the visual, can serve to illustrate the premium placed on vividness and visuality by authors, consumers, and theorists of ancient Greek narratives, and thus illustrate the continuity between narrative and dramatic genres as objects of ancient literary theory. The phenomenon that the Greeks called phrikê is clearly not a wholly culture-specific one; its roots, as an involuntary movement, antedate the origin of the human species; as a symptom of emotion, it belongs with basic responses that are rooted in the physiology of our and other species; and the name of the symptom becomes a name for a particular kind of emotional attitude by means of a mechanism, namely metonymy, that is ubiquitous in the formation of human concepts, especially emotional concepts. Even as a metonymy, however, phrikê retains many of its fundamental connotations as an automatic, involuntary, instinctive reaction—indeed it is precisely in order to retain connotations of that sort, to conjure up something of the experience of emotion rather than merely labelling it, that one would choose to say phrissoi, I shudder, rather than phoboumai, I am afraid.31 That being so, phrikê the emotion emerges as a particular kind of fear—immediate, instinctive, and much more regularly occurrent than
dispositional. The particular kind of fear that it makes its use especially appropriate in specific sorts of scenario. In many cases, the specifics of these scenarios depend in turn on the nature and development of Greek norms and values, especially where humans’ relations with the divine are concerned, but also in connexion with (e.g.) the norms and conditions of pity and with the nature of audiences’ responses to poetry, drama, historiography, and biography. This is not just a matter of a single and simple emotion having a range of different elicitors; the specific history of phrikê as a concept has to take account both of the ways that it is deeply enmeshed in elaborate ritual processes, such as mystic initiation, and of the particular associations of the term that make it especially appropriate both for vivid literary representation and as an element in the aesthetics of literary appreciation.

**Garments**

My second case-study takes us beyond the body and its symptoms to dress, not merely, in this case, as an extension of the body’s capacity to express emotion (though that, as we shall see, is also relevant), but as a source of emotion metaphor. Garment metaphors for emotion are both like and unlike the metaphors and metonymies drawn from physical symptoms that we have considered above. They illustrate the same universal tendency to derive abstract concepts from concrete physical experience. They make use of the same mechanism of metonymy in proceeding from actual physical movements to purely linguistic symbol. But while many, most, or all cultures no doubt use dress to express and symbolize emotion, the specific metaphors that Greek culture uses are not universal. As elements of ancient Greek ways of conceptualizing emotion, they depend on the pragmatics and symbolism of Greek dress as an aspect of the body’s interaction with the environment.

In Greek, garment metaphors for emotion form a subset of two larger categories: (i) of emotional metaphor in general; and (ii) of garment metaphors in general. (i) All emotions which have garment metaphors are also conceptualized in terms of other metaphors of the sort that we touched on above: ontological (both object and agent), conduit, container, force, opponent, and so on. (ii) Greek garment metaphors are a sub-species of a larger category of metaphors of covering or concealment, most commonly expressed via the verb kalyptein, to cover. Not all metaphorical coverings are garments: but kalyptein etc. do seem to have a prototypical reference to dress: the relevant locutions are very frequent indeed with reference to clothing; and each of the two nominal derivatives in early Greek, namely kalyptrê and kalymma, refers to a type of garment (i.e. the veil). Since garments are the prototypical example of things that kalyptein, metaphors of covering regularly generate or are transformed into metaphors of putting on or taking off clothes. Even when clothing is not the primary motive for the metaphor, that notion often appears to be latent, to the extent that all the target domains in which the general source metaphor of covering is applied may also be represented by specifically garment metaphors. There is thus no hard and fast separation between garment and non-garment applications of the relevant terms.

In early Greek hexameter, the relevant images are centred on a complex of intersecting metaphors based on various kinds of darkness, from actual night to phenomena such as sleep, swooning, and death. These categories bleed into each other, giving rise to further metaphors or metonymies. The general notion of ‘covering’ in these metaphors is often particularized as covering by means of a garment; and this is regularly related to the use of actual garments in life and ritual. There are many metaphors here; but the most relevant sub-category for us, for reasons that will become apparent, is of various metaphors for the experience of death.

In hexameter, entities such as night and darkness themselves are represented as coverings or garments. In Iliad 5 ‘night’ is a substance with which the war-god, Ares, is able to envelop the battlefield (Iliad 5. 506-7). But the locution ‘night covered his eyes’ is also a regular Iliadic metonymy for death. This generates a specific garment metaphor in one passage of the Odyssey (20. 351-7):

Ah, wretched men, what evil is this that you suffer? Clothed in night are your heads and your faces and your knees beneath you; kindled is the sound of wailing, bathed in tears are your cheeks, and sprinkled with blood are the walls and the fair rafters. And full of ghosts is the porch and full
the court, of ghosts that hasten down to Erebus beneath the darkness. The sun has perished out of heaven and an evil mist has run over all.

The seer Theoclymenus has a prophetic vision of the imminent deaths of Penelope’s suitors. He see suitors’ heads, faces, and knees clothed (the verb eilyein is a vox propria for the wearing of clothes) in night. This metaphorical clothing represents at once their own deaths (their ghosts go to the darkness of Erebus) and their lamentation at their own deaths (the wailing and tears). Similarly, in Homer, the metaphor of darkness (skotos) as a covering is not applied to simple environmental phenomena, but is exclusively a metonymy for death.35 This too can give rise to a specific garment metaphor, as at Sophocles, Oedipus at Colonus 1701, where Antigone addresses her dead father as ‘you who wear (heimai) darkness under the earth’.

Just as images of night and darkness as covering layers or garments are used as metonyms for death, so death is often conceived as a dark cloud, either in the phrase ‘dark cloud of death’ or simply as a dark cloud which stands metonymically for death.36 But death itself can also serve as a covering, either in the simple phrase ‘death enveloped him’ or using the periphrasis ‘the end that is death covered’ with a direct object.37 Death is not the personified agent in such locutions, but the covering itself.38 This is an image of the experience of death itself as something that comes over or envelops a person, just as darkness, night, and clouds do. Thus it lends itself to elaborations which bring out the latent notion of dress: the dark cloud that covers the dying in Homer becomes something that the dead have willingly ‘put on’ in Simonides’ epigram for the Spartan dead at Plataea (121 Diehl = Anthologia Palatina 7. 251. 2); and the Nurse in Euripides’ Hippolytus activates the notion of death as a garment when she draws a link between her literal covering of her mistress Phaedra’s head and the death whose covering will represent her own final release from trouble (250-1): ‘Very well, I shall hide (kryptein) your head; but when oh when will death cover (kalyptein) my body?’.

This notion of death as a covering or garment connects with historical social and religious practices in a number of ways, because the dead are literally covered. Bodies or cremated ashes are buried in the earth, and in Homer and later ‘the (poured) earth covers’ is a regular metonymy for death.39 The notion of earth as a layer of stuff that covers the dead may be more or less literal, but it is also used as a symbol for the abstract notion of death, and the latent idea of a garment in such phrases is activated in references to ‘wearing earth’ as a variant of the same metonymy.40 By the same token, the use of actual garments, whether by the dying to cover their faces or by the bereaved to cover the corpse or the cremated remains, serves as a physical embodiment of the metaphor of death as a cover or garment.41

This is where cloud metaphors come in. In Homer, ‘cloud cover’ is more often than not the result of deliberate divine action, and clouds are often used by the gods as a means of supernatural concealment. Such clouds regularly function as garments, as in the case of the golden cloud with which Zeus promises he will envelop himself and Hera before they make love (Iliad 14. 341-5):

In response the cloud-gatherer Zeus addressed her: ‘Have no fear that any god or man will see us, Hera. For with such a golden cloud shall I envelop (amphikalyptein) us. Not even Helios could see us through it, and his eyesight is sharpest of all.’

This cloud clearly functions as a blanket. But since the point of Zeus’ assurance is to assuage Hera’s ostensibly modest reluctance to make love in the open air (330-40), this figurative cloud-blanket has an obvious symbolic and affective significance in serving, as literal garments often do, as a metonym for aidê, the sense of shame or modesty.42 Accordingly, when the divine couple lie down together, they dress themselves in the beautiful golden cloud (350-1). Clouds as supernatural forms of concealment are not only like blankets or garments, they are explicitly said (using the verbs eilyein, hennysthai, and stephanousthai) to be worn as garments (or garlands).43 As we noted above, the same is true of metaphorical clouds: just as the concealment of a black cloud can be a metonymy for death (Iliad 20. 417-18), so the dark cloud of death can be something that one is said to ‘put on’ or ‘dress oneself in’ (once more, Simonides 121. 2 Diehl).44
This brings us, finally, to metaphorical clouds as images of emotion and to garment metaphors for emotion in general. The Homeric term achos is normally translated ‘grief’, but is in fact used more generally of a number of different forms of mental distress. In hexameter, achos is something that covers or envelops a person or a person’s phrenes, both as such and as the ‘cloud of achos’: the image may be conveyed by the several verbs meaning ‘cover’, ‘surround’, or ‘envelop’.

The intersection of this imagery with the metaphorical construction of night and darkness and with the literal use of actual garments is also apparent in a number of tragic and similar contexts, and especially in the final scene of Euripides’ Heracles (1140ff.). Heracles initially reacts to the realization that he has killed his wife and children by referring to the cloud of lamentation that envelopes him (1140), but the urge to kill himself that ensues (1146ff.) encompasses the desire to escape not only his suffering, but also his disgrace (1152), and with the arrival of his friend, Theseus (1153), his sense of shame becomes acute: at 1157-62 he envelops his head in darkness, out of shame, but also out of a concern not to transmit the spiritual contagion of bloodshed (miasma) by visual contact:

I’ll wrap darkness around my head. For I am ashamed on account of the wrongs I’ve done, and I have no wish to harm the innocent by infecting him with the guilt of fresh-spilt blood.

Both Theseus and Heracles’ father, Amphitryon, then urge Heracles to uncover his face, Theseus observing that ‘no darkness has a cloud dark enough to hide the disaster of [his] misfortunes’ (1215-17). The primary motives for Heracles’ veiling are his shame and his concern for pollution (see Amphitryon at 1199-1201, as well as Heracles himself at 1160-2), but grief is also part of his reaction, and there is a direct link between the cloud of lamentation that represents the initial shock of grief and the literal covering of Heracles’ head, described by Theseus as an attempt to hide his misfortunes in cloud and darkness.

It is no accident that the metaphors for the subjective experience of grief are so similar to those which occur in connexion with death. The homology between grief and dying as processes is mirrored also in the use of dress in external ritual expression: the dying cover their faces and the corpse is covered during the funeral, while veiling is both a spontaneous expression of grief and an element in mourning ritual. The Homeric metaphor of grief as a dark and enveloping substance belongs to a complex of images typically used of states that are either negative and disruptive or at least irruptive and overwhelming, especially of states that disturb conscious functioning. The kalyptein metaphors for night, darkness, clouds, and death are not merely visual or descriptive images, but have a strong affective charge. They represent a generalized, intersubjective version of a first-person perspective, an attempt to get inside what it feels like to die, to swoon, or to fall asleep. They are, in the strict sense, phenomenological. Accordingly, when directly applied to an emotion such as achos, the image of the cloud of grief or of grief itself as an enveloping garment amplifies the notion of the emotion as something that comes from outside the normatively functioning self and emphasizes it as a phenomenologically passive, irruptive mental event.

In Euripides, Heracles first experiences grief as a cloud that descends upon him, but then uses a literal garment (described both as a cloud and as darkness) as a way of coping with the emotions (principally shame) to which his grief gives rise. The veil or the mantle, of course, is a typical symbol of aidôs, used both as a concrete physical expression of the emotion and as a metonymy for the emotion itself. The notion of aidôs as itself a metaphorical garment is perhaps clearest at Herodotus 1. 8. 3, where Gyges, the captain of the Lydian king’s bodyguard, expresses his horror at his master’s suggestion that he should attempt to the queen naked:

‘Master, this is an unhealthy suggestion you are making, when you bid me see my mistress naked; when a woman takes off her dress, she takes off her aidôs at the same time.’

The physical clothing is the outward manifestation of a woman’s sense of propriety and of her claim to the respect of others. According to Gyges in Herodotus (and to Theano, the wife of Pythagoras, in Diogenes Laertius), when a woman takes off her clothes, so she takes off all these social and moral accoutrements. For Plutarch (Moralia 139C), on the other hand, when she takes off her clothes, she maintains her social and moral role by putting on an invisible

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garment of aidôs in their place. In either case, an actual garment stands for an emotional disposition itself conceived as a garment. Actual garments may serve as visible, external symbols of the disposition, but the disposition-as-garment and the actual garment can also be dissociated, as they are by Plutarch, and also by Plato’s Socrates, when he insists that naked female athletes can remain clothed in an invisible garment of aretê (virtue). The notion of aidôs as a garment is clearly presupposed in Homer. There, garments not only express aidôs (as in the case of Odysseus’ veiling at Odyssey 8. 83-6); they can also be said to cover one’s aidôs, a locution in which the noun stands – by a standard form of metonymy – not for the emotion, but for its object (in this case, the genitalia, ta aidoia, cf. German Schamteile). What covers one’s aidôs is aidôs itself. In hexameter poetry, however, the idea that aidôs can be represented by a concealing garment emerges as a metaphor only in the phrase ‘clothed in anaideiê (shamelessness)’, used twice of Agamemnon in the Iliad and once of Hermes in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes. This phrase paradoxically presents anaideiê not as the absence of the garment of aidôs, but as the presence of a garment of a completely opposite nature. The only other psychological quality to which the verb ‘to be clothed in’ (heimai) is applied in Homer is alkê, martial courage. In these locutions, there is a link (but also a disjunction) between the physical armour that one needs to put on in order to enter battle and the right emotional attitude that is the more important form of armour. This confirms that garment metaphors for aidôs, alkê, and aretê are different from similar metaphors for grief. The notion of grief as a cloud-like covering emphasizes the occurrent emotion, the sudden onset of an irruptive mental state. This fits with the non-garment metaphors for achos as an external force, as an opponent in a struggle, and the like. Garment metaphors for aidôs, on the other hand, align that emotion with dispositions such as courage and virtue; these do not suddenly cover a person, but are things that one can deliberately put on. Aidôs certainly can be an occurrent emotion; it can be something that ‘holds a person back’ or to which a person can ‘give in’. But aidôs is also the name of a disposition, the sense of honour, shame, or modesty; the distinction between occurrence and disposition is neatly encapsulated in the fact that achos simply ‘covers’ (a simple event in the aorist), whereas anaideiê (and so, by extension, aidôs) is worn (perfect with present sense).

Dress, even in its concrete, literal form, is laden with symbolism. In particular, dress extends, prosthetically, the body’s capacity to express thought and emotion. These physical expressions are then available as symbols for the emotional concepts that they express. All of the emotions for which garment metaphors exist can also be expressed or referred to metonymously by means of dress. An apparent exception is erôs, which (in two passages of the Iliad) is said to envelop one’s phrenes (a physical organ, perhaps the lungs or the diaphragm, but also an organ of thought used metonymously to express a notion not unlike English ‘mind’), but which can also be ‘poured out around the thymos’ (‘spirit’) and ‘subdue’ it. Ancient scholars were divided on the meaning of this imagery, whether it represents a further example of the ‘emotion as cloud’ schema or is a metaphor from hunting, a frequent source of erotic metaphors. Either a cloud of erôs or a net of erôs would be virtual garment metaphors, given that metaphorical clouds can be worn like garments and that actual garments can be metaphorical hunting nets. But the former is more likely, since amphikalyptein (envelop) is not used of literal (fishing) nets until Late Antiquity, and the suggestion seems to be an inference first from the regular use of hunt-imagery for sex and from an analogy with the relatively common word amphiblêstron, a fishing net. The primary force of the image is that of the mental impairment caused by a particularly irruptive and disruptive affective state. At Iliad 14. 316 the enveloping movement takes place within the chest, as the cloud of erôs subdues the thymos, which suggests the general Homeric analogy between external environmental phenomena and the physical underpinnings of mental events. Yet, as we have already had occasion to note, Iliad 14 is replete with associations between clouds and garments as images and instruments of sleep, seduction, and sexuality, and it is likely that the images of erôs as a type of covering are related also to the actual use of textiles as covers for love-making, and in particular to the use of the blanket as a metonym for sexual activity.
However that may be, the presentation of *erôs* in these passages certainly belongs with that of other phenomenologically passive experiences. In contrast to this group stands a second, in which imagery of putting on, taking off, and wearing is used to represent emotion as what we might call *habitus*, both dress and disposition. In the case of both groups, the actual use of garments in emotional and ritual behaviour underlies the metaphor: garment metaphors recur in the conceptualization of those emotions that are most associated with the use of garments in their physical expression. But there are some emotions for which garments are common as expressions and metonymies, but which seem not to generate garment metaphors. There are, as far as I can see, no garment metaphors for anger, fear, or despair, though all of these emotions can be expressed and symbolized by the veiling of the head. My guess is that in these cases covering the head is felt to be merely one of many possible expressions, while in the case of (e.g.) grief or *aidôs* it is a characteristic and prototypical expression, and thus a much clearer symbol of the emotion.

**Conclusion**

The metonymies and metaphors for emotion that we have been considering in this study are drawn from the symptomatology and physical expression of emotion. To some extent, the data that we use to study these can be supplemented by material, especially visual evidence, for example from vase painting and sculpture. But even in interpreting gesture and non-verbal communication as such, we need the corroboration of textual evidence if we are to avoid the charge of solipsism, of simply seeing the conventions of our own culture reflected in our interpretations of the visual culture of the ancient Greeks. What we have been investigating in this paper, however, is something different — not the non-verbal expression of emotion in physical symptoms, gesture, and dress, but the use of these embodied aspects of emotion in the construction of concepts and categories of emotion in language and thought. The way that these metaphors and metonymies draw on the body and its interactions with the natural and social environments reflects the fact that both the primary and the non-primary ways in which we make sense of the world depend on our experience as holistic, physically embodied organisms in sensory contact with the environments through which we move.

This is important in two ways. First, it shows us that the historical study of emotions via language, literature, and texts is not just a matter of specifying historical developments and cross-cultural differences in the semantics of the conceptual terms that cultures use to label emotions. The latter is an important enterprise, but there is much more to the language of emotion than that enterprise suggests. Second, it is the study of emotion metaphor, rather than the investigation of the sense and reference of emotion labels, that allows us to get as close as we can to the ways in which a culture, and especially a culture of the past, seeks to encapsulate the phenomenology of emotion in the intersubjective medium of language. What we get in these cases, through language and literature, is a sense of what it felt like, or at least what it was supposed in a given culture to feel like, to feel an emotion of a certain sort. Language and literature are primary sources for this sense of the intersubjective phenomenology of emotion; and through the language and the literature of the past we can at least get a little closer to something of that phenomenology in historical contexts that otherwise give us no direct access to the felt experience of long-dead individuals.

**Notes**


3 Cf. Walter Burkert, “Horror Stories: Zur Begegnung von Biologie, Philologie, und Religion”, in Anton Bierl and Wolfgang Baumgart (eds), Gewalt und Opfer: Im Dialog mit Walter Burkert, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2010, p. 45-56, at p. 48-9. The Hippocratic corpus has 60 occurrences of the noun, phrikê, 36 of the verb, phrissein (cf. one instance of the synonym, phrikasein), and 53 of the derivative adjective, phrikôdês (plus one of the synonym, phrikaleos). In Galen, the figures are 110, 49, and 86 respectively. In medical writers, phrikê is especially associated with fever and cold sweats (e.g. Hippocrates, Aphorisms 7. 4. On Diseases 1. 23-5; cf. Norbert Zink, Griechische Ausdruckswörter für warm und kalt im seelischen Bereich, Diss, Mainz, 1962, p. 19 n. 49; Pierangiolo Berrettoni, “Il lessico tecnico del I e III libro delle epidemie ipocritiche”, Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Lettere, storia e filosofia, ser. 2, 39, 1970, p. 27-106, 217-311, at p. 262; Dieter Op de Hipt, Adjektive auf –ονθο: im Corpus Hippocraticum, Hamburg, Sasse, 1972, p. 210-11. In the Aristotelian Problematata, see esp. Book 8 (887b10-889b9) on chill (rhigos) and shivering (phrikê – 9 occurrences of the root; there are a further 25 occurrences elsewhere in the work). Cf. e.g. Iesiod, Works and Days 539-540 (phrissein of human piloerection in cold weather); Plutarch, De primo frigido 947C (phrikê and tromos, trembling, are names for the ‘battle’ between hot and cold). Hippocrates and Galen each draw distinctions between phrikê and rhigos (the former is milder than the latter, according to HIPPOCRATES, Aphorisms, On Diseases 1. 24; the former affects only the skin, the latter the whole body, according to GALEN, De tremore vii. 612. 9-12 Kühn), though Galen notes that ‘all other medical writers’ use the terms interchangeably (De tremore vii. 611. 18-612. 4). Two late sources confirm Galen’s view of his fellow professionals (PALLADIUS, Synopsis de febribus 24 in Julius L. Ideler, Physici et medici Graeci minores vol. I, Berlin, Reimer, 1841, p. 117-18; THEOPHILUS and STEPHANUS of ATHENS, De febrium differentia in Demetrius Sicurus, Theophilus et Stephani Atheniensis de febrium differentia ex Hippocrate et Galeno, Florence, F. Benciini, 1862, p. 30-2). Cf. the grammarians in n. 21 below.

4 Cf. Berrettoni, Il Lessico tecnico, p. 263. Galen, however, insists on the existence of other causes, e.g. the application of bitter drugs (De tremore vii. 627. 11-629. 5 Kühn). He also distinguishes between phrikê and rhigos as symptoms of fear and as signs of physical cold (ibid., 628. 2-4); contrast [ARISTOTLE, Problemata 889a15-25, on the role of bodily temperature in the emotions of fear and anger.

5 E.g. [ARISTOTLE, Physiognomonica 812b30, Problemata 888a38, 889a26, [ALEXANDER of APHRODISIAS, Problemata 2. 26; cf. [THEOCRITUS, Idyll 25. 244, PLUTARCH fr. 73 Sandbach. Cf. the frequency of the association between ‘goose bumps’ (UK English goose pimples) and physical cold (as also with fever and other biological functions such as sneezing) in the studies of David R. Schurtz, Sarah Blincoe, Richard H. Smith, Caitlin A. J. Powell, David J. Y. Combs, and Sung Hee Kim, “Exploring the Social Aspects of Goose Bumps and their Role in Awe and Envy”, Motivation and Emotion 36. 2 2012, p. 205-12.

6 Sophocles fr. 875 Radi, [ARISTOTLE, Physiognomonica 812b30 (again), NICANDER, Theriaca 721, 727, PLUTARCH, Aristides 18. 2 (developing the Homeric image by which weapons etc. bristle like the fur of an angry animal), Dio Chrysostom Oration 58. 4, ACHILLES TATIUS 1. 12. 3, x 14 in AELIAN, On the Nature of Animals, [ALEXANDER of APHRODISIAS, Problematata 4. 159.

7 Specifically on symptoms of fear, see Charles DARWIN, The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals, 3rd edn, ed. Paul Ekman, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, p.70-1, 346-7 (trembling), 100-1, 104-5, 291-2, 295-8 (piloerection), 291, 346-7 (temperature changes), with Ekman’s comments and further reading where relevant; cf. Ireneíus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Human Ethology, New York, De Gruyter, 1989, p. 371 (on piloerection), 479 (on changes in skin temperature); Jonathan Balcombe, Second Nature: The Inner Lives of Animals, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 48 (on changes in body and skin temperature as symptoms of fear and other emotions in humans and animals); cf. also Burkert “Horror Stories”, p. 46. Dacher Keltner and Jonathan Haidt, “Approaching Awe, a Moral, Spiritual, and Aesthetic Emotion”, Cognition and Emotion 17. 2. 2003, p. 297-314, associate human piloerection, as a symptom of emotion, primarily with awe, as do SCHURTZ et al., “Goose Bumps”, who find an association between piloerection and fear in only a small number of their respondents (US college students, whose exposure to genuinely fear-inducing scenarios may be limited, as the authors observe, p. 210). But the association with fear and fear-like states is dominant in the ancient Greek context.

8 For low body temperature as a metonym for fear in various cultures, see Kövecses, Metaphor and Emotion, 5. 23-4; for a survey of psychological applications of words meaning ‘warm’ and ‘cold’ in Greek, see Zink, Warm and kalt, esp. p. 15-30 on “Kälte” als Ausdruck einer unangenehmen Gefühlslage wie Schreck, Angst, Furcht, Entsetzen, Grauen”; cf. also David Bouver, “Du frisson (phrikê) d’horreur


11 For this phenomenon, cf. APOLLONIUS DYSCOLUS, De constructione 413. 5-415. 2.

12 The Greek here has no preposition analogous to ‘at’ in English; the verb simply governs the direct object.

13 The response on which Phaedra comments in the hypothetical adulteress, of course, involves a failure to experience the guilty fear of exposure that Phaedra herself would feel in such a situation; thus, though still a form of fear, phrikê is here implicated in a scenario that also encompasses prospective and retrospective shame. On this aspect of the wider context, see Douglas L. CAIRNS, Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 321-40.


15 E.g. PLUTARCH, Sulla 11. 1: ‘so as to give phrikê to the people’; cf. LAKOFF and JOHNSON, Metaphors, p. 11, KOVECSES, Metaphor and Emotion, p. 89.

16 PLUTARCH, Aemilius Paullus 17. 8 (held down), Caesar 66. 9 (held), Publicola 7. 1 (held); CHARITON 1. 8. 2 (took); cf. its occurrence at HIPPOCRATES, Epidemics 7. 1. 11 of phrikê as a symptom of physical disease (‘she suffered from occasional attacks of phrikê’). Cf. KOVECSES, Metaphor and Emotion, p. 68-70.

17 E.g. HERODOTUS 6. 134 (came over); ACILLES TATIUS 5. 21. 2 (ran over); PHILOSTRATUS, Heroicus 666. 7-8 (came over).

18 In Homer, rhygein seems to refer consistently to shuddering or shivering, whether as a symptom of emotion (x12 IIiad, x 2 Odyssey) or as a metonym for it (IIiad 3. 353-4, 5. 350-1, 7. 113-14, 17. 174-75, Odyssey 23. 215-17; cf. PINDAR, Nemean 5. 50, APOLLONIUS RHODIUS 3. 437-8, RHIANUS fr. 1. 7 Powell). It seems never to be used of simply being physically cold, a sense which is reserved for rhigion (only at Odyssey 14. 481): see ZINK, Warm and kalt, 15-16.

19 rhigion: x 3 IIiad, x 2 Odyssey; cf. HESIOD, Works and Days 703, MIMNERMUS 4. 2 W, SEMONIDES 6. 2 W, APOLLONIUS RHODIUS 3. 402-3, 429-30; Odyssey 17. 191 is the only use of the term with reference to physical temperature; cf. ZINK, Warm and kalt, 22-3.

20 For rhigistos, see e.g. IIiad 5. 873-4, LYCOPHRON, Alexandra 2. 292, APOLLONIUS RHODIUS 2. 215-16, NICANDER, Ther. 64; cf. rhigulos, [HESIOD], Scutum 131. NICANDER, Alexipharmaca 220.

21 Cf. II. 8. 64 (of war), APOLLONIUS RHODIUS 2. 607 (of fear), QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS 1. 133, 539 (battle), 13. 88 (death). Cf. kryoeis II. 5. 740 (battle), 9. 2 (riot), HESIOD, Theogony 936 (war), [HESIOD], Scutum 255 (Tartarus), STEISCHORUS S11. 5 PMGF (death), PINDAR, Python 4. 73 (prophecy), BACCHYLIDES fr. 60. 12 Maehler (war), EUPHORION, Supplementum Hellenisticum 415 col. 2. 3 Lloyd-Jones/Parsons (war), BATRACHOMYOMACHIA 73 (fear), QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS 7. 363 (fear); cf. ZINK, Warm and kalt, 24-25. For these various adjectives as synonyms, see APOLLONIUS SOPHISTES, Lexicon Homericum 138. 32, HESYCHIUS κ 4252, 4253, 4264, ο 494, 495, p 299, 300, 301. On could extend this analysis to include terms such as tromos, trembling; but that is a project for another day.

22 Cf. BURKERT, “Horror Stories”, p. 54.


24 E.g. EURIPIDES, Hippolytus 1201-2 (sounds of supernatural origin), 1215-16 (ditto), ANDROMACHE 1147-8 (ditto), ARISTOPHANES, Ranae 1335-6 (ditto), ANDROCIDES, De mysteriis 29 (both sound and content, i.e. horrific tales of religious transgressions),
25 E.g. XENOPHON, Cyropoeia 4, 2. 15, JOSEPHUS, Jewish Antiquities 19, 344-5, PLUTARCH, Marcellus 20. 8, De Alexandri magno fortuna 343E, etc. Cf. the shudders that respond to epiphanies at HESIOD fr. 165. 4-5 Merkelbach-West and to the divine sign from Zeus that marks Oedipus’ heroization at SOPHOCLES, Oedipus at Colonus 1606-7, though in both these places the verb employed is rhigein. For the ‘holy shudder’, cf. esp. BURKERT “Horror Stories”, p. 50-4; also KELTNER and HAITZ, “Approaching Awe”, p. 298-9, 308-10 on awe and religion. Only a very small number of respondents in the survey of SCHURTZ et al., “Goose Bumps”, refer their goose pimples to religious experiences (p. 209); but this may simply reflect the limited scope for profound religious experiences in the lives of typical US college students over the four-week period of the survey (as the authors note, p. 210).


27 Cf. the emphasis on the visual not only in the Achaeans’ response to the daughter of Epigetes (οὖν δὲ τοῖς πολίταις θέαμα σεμνότερον ἢ κατ’ ἄνθρωπον ἐφάνη, ‘to the citizens themselves she seemed to the citizens a more solemn spectacle than to men’), 32. 2), but also in the alternative version in which it is the sight of the cult-image of the goddess that repels the Aetolians (32. 3 μηδένα προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον, ‘no one looks directly at it’, ὅραμα φρικτὸν εἶναι ὅτι τοῖς πολίταις θέαμα σεμνότερον ἢ κατ’ ἄνθρωπον ἐφάνη, ‘to the citizens themselves she seemed to the citizens a more solemn spectacle than to men’), 32. 4 (ὁντὶ ἵπποιον, ‘face to face’).


29 See e.g. DEMETRIUS, De eloctutione 101 (‘the mysteries too are spoken of allegorically, to arouse shock and phrikê, e.g. “in darkness and night’’); cf. JOSEPHUS, Jewish Wars 2. 133, LUCIAN, Jupiter tragoeudos 30, ARISTIDES, Hieroi logoi 2, 297. 20-21 Jebb (cf. 256. 24, 320. 5). Phrikôdês etc. are frequently used in Christian writers’ representations of Christian dogma and practice, esp. the sacrament, as mysteries (e.g. phrikê x 2, phrīsēs x 3, phrikôdês x 19, phrikôkês x 59 in John Chrysostom).

30 See e.g. SOPHOCLES, Trachinia 1044-5, [AESCHYLYS] Prometheus Bound 695, JOSEPHUS, Jewish Wars 6. 201-19 (esp. 210, 213-14), PLUTARCH, Aemilius Paullus 29. 5, 35. 3.


34 Iliad 5. 310, 659, 11. 356, 13. 424-5, 580; see Bernard MOREUX, “La nuit, l’ombre, et la mort chez Homère”, Phoenix 21, 1967, p. 237-72. Cf. the swoon: Iliad 14. 438-9, 22. 466. On the analogy between fainting and death, see Michael J. Clarke, Flesh and Spirit in the Songs of Homer: A Study of Words and Myths, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 139-43. I refer to this as a metaphor rather than a metaphor because, though the use of the term ‘night’ is metaphorical, the loss of vision is an aspect, symptom, or effect of the overall experience of death or the swoon. In fact, the locution involves both metaphor and metonymy, and illustrates the close interaction between the two (on which see THEODOROPOLOU, “The Emotion Seeks to Be Expressed”).


36 ‘Dark cloud of death’: Iliad 16. 350, THEOGNIS 707, BACCHYLIDES 13. 63-4, SIMONIDES 121 Diehl = Anthologia Palatina 7. 251. 2; for the dark cloud (simpliciter) as a metonymy for death, see Iliad 20.
417. Cf. mist (achlys) poured over the eyes as a metonymy for death: Iliad 5. 696, 16. 344, Odyssey 22. 88. A version of the same phrase is used of the grief of Hector at the death of a brother at Iliad 20. 421; cf. achos at Iliad 20. 282, Odyssey 4. 716 (cf. n. 45 below). Cf. also EURIPIDES, Phoenissae 1310-12: the city is surrounded by ‘a cloud of such a kind as to pass through Acheron’, with an allusion to veiling as a mark of the passage between life and death (n. 41 below).

37 See Iliad 5. 68, 553 (‘the end that is death’), 16. 502 (ditto), 855 (ditto), 22. 361 (ditto); cf. Iliad 13. 544, 16. 414, 580 ‘around him death was gathered’; EURIPIDES. Tro. 1315 (black death); APOLLONIUS RHEDIOUS. 3. 1130 (‘fated death covers’). On ‘the telos (end) that is death’ in particular and telos in general, see Richard B. ONIANS, The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time, and Fate, 2nd edn, Cambridge University Press, 1954, p. 426-66. See Robert R. DYER, “The Use of Kalypnô in Homer”, Glotta 42, 1964, p. 29-38.

38 For veiling as expression of/metonymy for grief and mourning, see Douglas L. CAIRNS, “The Meaning of the Veil in Ancient Greek Culture”, in Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones (ed.), Women’s Dress in Ancient Greece, Swansea, Classical Press of Wales, 2002, p. 73-93, at p. 75-6, 82-3; “Weeping and Veiling”. The non-verbal expression of grief and mourning gives rise to a similar kind of metaphor when the verb amyssein, used esp. for the tearing of one’s clothes or flesh (e.g. Iliad 19. 284-5), is applied to the psychological pain of grief itself, as at AESCHYLUS, Persae 115, 161, BACCHYLIDES 17. 18-19, 18. 11, CALLIMACHUS,
Aetia fr. 75. 10-11 Pfeiffer, [AESCHYNES], Epistle 12. 10; cf. Iliad 1. 243-4: Agamemnon will tear his thymos (spirit) in anger that he paid no honour to the best of the Achaeans.

50 For veiling as expression of aidôs: see Douglas L. CAIRNS, ‘‘Off with her Aidôs’’; Herodotus 1. 8. 3-4’, Classical Quarterly 46, 1996, p. 78-83; ‘‘Veiling, Aidôs, and a Red-Figure Amphora by Phintias’’, Journal of Hellenic Studies 116, 1996, p. 152-8; ‘‘The Meaning of the Veil’’; cf. Lloyd LLEWELLYN-JONES, Aphrodite’s Torso: The Veiled Woman of Ancient Greece, Swansea, Classic Press of Wales, 2003. For its function as symbol, see e.g. the explicit comments of the scholar on Euripides Phoenissae 1485-6 (cf. the scholiast on Odyssey 1. 334). That the gesture is symbolic of the emotion is shown by its use as a purely linguistic metonymy (Sprachgebärde), as at PLUTARCH, Moralia 987C = Bruta animalia ratione uti 4 (where ‘‘you do not veil yourself to be called …’’ means ‘‘you are not ashamed to be called’’).

51 With HERODOTUS 1. 8. 3, cf. PLUTARCH, Moralia 139C = Conjugalia praecopta 10 (‘‘the modest woman puts on her aidôs in place of her dress’’), Moralia 37D = De recta ratione audiendi 1 (some boys are like Gyges’ wife in removing their aidôs and phobos when they take off their cloaks), DIOGENES LAERTIUS 8. 43 (Theanou ‘‘used to advise any woman about to go to her own husband to take off her sense of shame, aischynê, along with her clothes, and to put it back on again along with them when leaving his bed’’). For aidôs as a metaphorical garment, cf. PINDAR, Pythian 9. 12 (Aphrodite ‘‘cast lovely aidôs on their [sc. Apollo’s and Cyrene’s] sweet lovemaking’’), and cf. the cloud as blanket as expression of aidôs at Iliad 11. 343-50, discussed above). See further CAIRNS, ‘‘Off with her Aidôs’’; GLORIA FERRARI, ‘‘Figures of Speech: The Picture of Aidôs’’, Métis 5, 1990, p. 185-204; ‘‘Figures in the Text: Metaphors and Riddles in the Agamemnon’’, Classical Philology 92, 1997, p. 1-45, at p. 6; Figures of Speech: Men and Maidens in Ancient Greece, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2002, p. 54-6.

52 PLATO, Republic 457a: ‘‘the wives of the Guardians must also strip for exercise, provided that they put on their virtue (areté) in place of their garments’’.

53 Iliad 2. 262 (Thersites’ clothes cover his aidôs; for the metonymic shift from the subjective to the objective field, cf. 22. 7). Here too, then, the clothes themselves stand for the subjective sense of aidôs.

54 Iliad 1. 149, 9. 372, Homeric Hymn to Hermes 156.


56 Cf. ONIANS, Origins, p. 420.

57 Aidôs holds one back: Iliad 15. 657; yielding to one’s aidôs: Iliad 10. 238.

58 See in detail CAIRNS, Aidôs.

59 Similar distinctions are apparent also in the imagery of death: as an event or passive experience, death ‘‘covers’’ (typically in the aorist); in reference to the permanent state of those who have died, however, verbs of ‘‘wearing’’ can be used (e.g. SOPHOCLES, Oedipus at Colonus 1701, PINDAR, Nemean 11. 16; cf. above n. 40); and the death of voluntary self-sacrifice can be something that one willingly ‘‘puts on’’ (SOPHOCLES, Oedipus at Colonus 1701). See further SIMONIDES 121. 2 Diehl = Anthologia Palatina 7. 251, 2, discussed above).

60 Iliad 3. 442 (‘‘never before has erôs so enveloped my senses’’), 14. 294 (‘‘when he saw her, erôs tightly enveloped his senses’’); cf. 14. 315-16 (‘‘never before has erôs [sic] for a goddess or a woman so subdued me, streaming around the thymos in my chest’’).

61 See EUSTATHIUS i. 681. 11-13, i. 682. 9-10 on Iliad 3. 442, iii. 647. 14-22 on 14. 294, bT scholia ad locc.

62 For amphiblêstron (commonly a kind of fishing net) as a garment, see AESCHYLUS, Agamemnon 1382, Choephoroi 492, SOPHOCLES, Trachiniae 1052, EURIPIDES, Helen 1079, Telephus fr. 697 Kanchnitt.


64 THYMOS is itself often conceived as a substance that can be breathed in or out: Iliad 4. 522-4, 13. 653-5, 16. 468-9, 20. 403, 21. 416-17; cf. ONIANS, Origins, p. 44-50, 421; CLARKE, Flesh and Spirit, p. 61-126. But if erôs [sic] in Iliad 14. 316 is a cloudy substance within the breast, so is it also an agent that exerts power over an opponent (it has ‘‘tamed’’ or ‘‘subdued’’ its patient); the ontological metaphor of emotion as cloud is extended by its personification as internal agent.

65 See esp. 14. 282 (Hera and Hypnos dressed in air, above n. 43), 342-3 (Zeus will cover himself and Hera with a cloud, discussed above), 350-1 (they put on the golden cloud, also discussed above), 359 (Hypnos has covered Zeus with sleep, kôma); cf. the pouring of sleep over the eyes at 165-6, around the mind at 252-3, Hera’s dressing at 178-86 (including ‘‘the goddess veiled herself from the head down with her head-dress’’, 184).

66 For ‘‘covered by a blanket’’ as a metonymy for sex, see HOMERIC HYMN TO APHRODITE 158, ARCHILLOCUS fr. 196a. 45 West, SOPHOCLES, Trachiniae 539-40 (with Malcolm DAVIES (ed.), Sophocles: Trachiniae,
This paper presents examples of the role played by metaphor in the formation of ancient Greek emotional concepts. Previous studies of emotion in ancient Greek societies have focused chiefly on the terms that the ancient Greeks used to label their emotional experiences. Such an approach is fundamental, yet overlooks important elements of the language of emotion. The characteristic symptoms, physiological changes, expressions, and behaviours associated with the emotions typically become metonyms for the emotions themselves and are represented in cognitive metaphors that form part of a culture’s conceptual model of emotion. Thus the embodied nature of emotions is reflected in language, and in so far as the metaphors and metonyms of folk physiology are limited by the observed phenomena of real physiology and predicated on basic conceptual structures that are rooted in human beings’ embodied nature, no serious study of emotion language can afford to ignore these aspects. A comprehensive study of emotional metaphor in ancient Greek can thus be expected to present much that is, in broad terms, familiar to us from our own languages. The interesting questions, however, concern the interplay between what is universal and what is specific in both the formation and the application of such concepts. This paper explores some of these questions with particular reference to two Greek images: the symptom of shivering or shuddering; and the representation of grief and other emotions as enveloping garments.
Cet article présente des exemples du rôle joué par la métaphore dans la formation des concepts grecs anciens de l’émotion. Les travaux antérieurs sur l’émotion dans la société grecque ancienne se sont intéressés principalement aux termes utilisés par les Grecs anciens pour désigner leurs expériences émotionnelles. Une telle approche est fondamentale, mais elle ignore d’importants éléments du langage de l’émotion. Les symptômes caractéristiques, les changements physiologiques, les expressions et les comportements associés aux émotions deviennent typiquement des métonymies pour les émotions elles-mêmes, et sont représentés dans des métaphores cognitives qui font partie du modèle conceptuel de l’émotion d’une culture. Ainsi, la nature incarnée des émotions se reflète dans le langage, et dans la mesure où les métaphores et les métonymies de l’étymologie populaire sont limitées par les phénomènes observables de la physiologie réelle et fondées sur des structures conceptuelles basiques ayant leurs racines dans la nature incarnée des êtres humains, aucune étude sérieuse du langage de l’émotion ne peut se permettre d’ignorer ces aspects. On est donc en droit de s’attendre à ce qu’une étude exhaustive de la métaphore émotionnelle en Grec ancien présente un grand nombre d’aspects qui, dans les grandes lignes, nous sont familiers dans nos propres langues. Cependant, les questions les plus intéressantes concernent à l’interaction entre ce qui est universel et ce qui est particulier, à la fois dans la formation et dans l’application de tels concepts. Cet article explore certaines de ces questions en se référant en particulier à deux images grecques : le symptôme du tremblement ou du frémissement ; et la représentation de la peine et d’autres émotions comme un vêtement enveloppant.

Mots-clés : émotion, métaphore, métonymie, rôle du corps dans les concepts d’émotion

Keywords : emotion, metaphor, metonymy, role of the body in emotion concepts

Notes de l’auteur

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