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The Words for Fear in Ancient Greek from an Etymological Perspective

Abstract: This article aims to make a contribution to typological semantics presenting the patterns of semantic development attested in Ancient Greek. The etymology of 22 word families meaning ‘fear’ and occurring in Ancient Greek has been examined and classified, according to their original semantics, into 11 groups belonging to six semantic fields. The etymological analysis outlines six large groups in terms of semantic development based mainly on metonymy. The contextual analysis of the uses of the words denoting fear shows that in Ancient Greek, most lexemes do not just indicate the emotion of fear but also contain a semantic component linked to a physical symptom or reaction.

Keywords: etymology; emotions; fear; Ancient Greek; Indo-European

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