

The Somatic Idiomatic “Fear” Concept in the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

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ABSTRACT: In this article we intend to study lexemes that express emotions produced by fear from the perspective of lexicography and prophetic semantics, the lexem generating, depending on the relationship between the linguistic sense and the literary image, different directions of meaning: direct through constitutive features of the semantics of ascending emotions or indirect, through the syntactic structures in which they integrate. From the perspective of conceptual analysis (studying the meaning of all the words and expressions that are associated with a certain concept and which includes their systematization) we defined the term as a cultural phenomenon accompanied by a specific historical development, corresponding to the keyword of the proposed topic, also having an important presence in the Biblical text.

KEYWORDS: affective terms, fear, fright, emotion

Introduction

In addressing the theme we will focus on the coordinate of the Biblical text, especially on the Book of the prophet Jeremiah, in the text being a series of words to indicate *fear, terror, fear, fearing, horror, fright, reverence*, lexeme analysis will go beyond the semantic sphere (it starts from the lexical unit to the semantic content), starting from the sense towards the means of expression. We will also start from Mary Buchowski-Kurus's (2015) conception which states that: "fear-based emotions stimulate the release of a set of chemical substances, while those based on love, a completely different set of substances." When fear-based emotions are prolonged and chronic in the human body, the immune system and the endocrine system are affected. Hidden or repressed emotions cause major difficulties in the human body and the energy system. These affect the person's relations with others, the growth of the spiritual person and the change of the level of consciousness. (Manolache 2012, 33-55; 2019, 56-64). So, there are only two basic emotions that we all experience: love (joy, happiness, caring, trust, compassion, truth, gratification, satisfaction) and fear (anxiety, anger, sadness, depression, confusion, pain, loneliness, guilt, shame, fright), (Buchowski-Kurus 2015; Manolache 2017, 33-41).

1. The contextual meanings of the lexeme

The inventory of anticipatory sociomorphic affections is based on the concept / fear /: *fearful, frightened, terror, to scare, scary, to terrorize; horror, to (be) terrified; dread, to frighten, aghast, terrified; to (be) scared, frightened; to be fearful, fear, fearsome, fearful, fearless, fear*. All other emotions are variations of them and, as the linguist Wierzbicka (1986, 584) states, they may be specific to certain cultures, rendered in the respective language. Thus, the cultural-affective dimension is the religious one (fear of God / of thy neighbor). According to G. Stoica's statement, retrospective emotions have an affective cognitive model, therefore, the epistemic-anticipatory (euphoric) emotion class implies a future design of affective evaluations (Stoica 2012, 128).

The lexicographic definition of the word *fear* has a clear terminological note: starting from the liminal distinctions in the *Small Academic Dictionary* (2010, s.v. ***fear, horror, terror***), thus, we will notice that in the synonymic series of the lexeme ***fear*** two of the terms are inherited from the Latin language: ***fright*** and ***terror*** (the lexeme ***fright*** names a 'tolerable feeling', referring to *the anxiety of the soul* in the face of a foreseeable evil, but doubled by the tendency to avoid it, and ***terror*** means 'negative emotion'). Aristotle defines fear as an anticipation of a negative event: "We are obviously afraid of what provokes fear, and what provokes it is, generally

speaking, evil; therefore, fear is defined as expectation of evil. Therefore, we fear all evils, such as dishonor, poverty, illness, lack of friends, death” (Aristotle 2003, 48).

Instead, the lexeme *horror* comes from Slavonic and is defined as ‘fear, scare caused intentionally by threats or other means of intimidation’ (with a rich lexical family: *terrible, to terrify, terrified, terrifying*), followed by the *fear* loan from Gr. *φρίκη* used in popular form, also encountered in the magical imprecations of the I-VI centuries, but in addition to this popular form in ancient Greek was also used the noun *φρίξ, φρικός* (<γύρος: ω) ‘fear, terror, horror’. In fact, the Neo-Greek language has also retained the form *φρίκη* (αίσθημα τρόμου ή αποτροπιασμού // πράγμα φριχτό ‘sense of horror or terror // frightening thing’), (Mihăescu 1966,6). The term *fear* has the Greek correspondent *φόβο* with the meaning ‘the one who frees you from the fear, the mighty’, for example in Genesis 31:42 according to a translation from the Hungarian language, has the sense of ‘relative, affine, protector (stronger)’, (Gafton 2010, 49).

At the same time, there are also a number of neologisms that enrich the synonymic series of the term studied: *anguish, horror, poltroonery* and others.

The lexical family of the basic word *fear* includes *fearing-feared-fearful-fearless*, the lexeme being associated as meaning with *seeker, mortal, grinder*, but also with *mistrustful, distrust, suspicion* (synonyms). From the morphological point of view, the term *fear* is used with substantive, verbal and adjectival value (*fearful, to frighten and frightened*) instead the term *fright* is largely used with verbal value in the imperative way. The expressiveness of the terms is augmented pejoratively or appreciatively by the suffix. Even though the suffix implies the formation of adjectival derivatives, the term being used as a noun, since it is frequently interchangeable with *fright* and, infiltrated in church texts, it could also name the special relationship with the Divinity (“man with the fear of God”).

According to the Dictionary of Synonyms, the noun *fear* enters into a synonym relationship with the following words: *apprehension, worry, concern, anxiety, stress, doubt, fright, anxiety, irascibility, feeling, nervousness, remorse, solicitude, uncertainty*. In the WordReference Romanian-English Dictionary (n.d.) we find adjective synonyms of the lexeme *anxious*: alarmed (alarmat), concerned (neliniștit, îngrijorat), distraught (aiurit, înnebunit), distressed (stresat), disturbed (deranjat), edgy (enervate, iritat), fearful (înfrișat), fraught (plin de primejdii), fretful (framîntat, irascibil), jittery (iritat), nervous (nervos), nervy (nervos, enervant), on edge (pe margine), overwrought (foarte agitat, surescitat), perturbed (tulburat), restless (neastîmpărat, neliniștit), tense (tensionat), troubled (necăjit), uneasy (stingherit, stînjenit), upset (supărat), watchful (vigilant, atent), worried (neliniștit).

1.1. The basic meaning of the lexeme *fear* is “don't fret”

The semic analysis of the behavioral verb will be outlined in different contexts, the combinability with other verbs, as well as the specific completion of the actantial and circumstantial positions can maintain or modify its systemic significance. Thus, for starters the present meaning of the verb is the same as the lexical one.

Jeremiah 1:8: ‘**Do not be afraid** of them, for I am with you to deliver you’, declares the LORD.

The verb in the imperative mode “do not be afraid” implies the rebuke of God for lack of courage, but also the encouragement to lean in the Arm of the Lord, the emphasis being placed on God's love.

Jeremiah 5:24: *They do not say in their hearts, ‘Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives the rain in its season, the autumn rain and the spring rain, and keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest.’*

In this context, the term renders the Hebrew *nîrah* in a cohortative way, highlighting the people's refusal to trust the God who sends rain on time, the Israelites attributing these rains to Baal. The use of the conjunctive mode also highlights other emotional/affective states: *admiration, wonder and respect*, the conjunctive being the way of doubts and hesitation that underlines the soul tension, (Jeremia 2012, 111).

Jeremiah 10:2: *This is what the LORD says: “Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the heavens, though the nations are terrified by them”.*

In ancient times, astrology was a landmark in religious beliefs, and the comparison of idols with a scarecrow highlights the power of God compared to that of idols that are nothing more than man's creation of stone, wood, silver and gold, an idea rendered also in verse 15 *they are a thing of nothing, a deceitful work, and they will perish when the punishment comes.*

Jeremiah 10:15: *These gods are like a scarecrow of birds in a field of cucumbers, and speak not; they are carried by others, because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do any harm and are unable to do any good.*

1.2. The meaning of 'be terrified' is broader than the usual one, because an "enrichment" of the semantics of the verb takes place by involving the subject and the way of performing the action called by the verb.

Jeremiah 1:17: *"Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not tremble before them, or I will make you tremble before them"*

To understand the message of the verse, we stop at the formula, *says the Lord* based on the Hebrew למרק *ith* the meaning of 'whispering, saying a secret', so that the message was a familiar and not authoritative encouragement as we find in v. 17 by using the imperative *do not tremble*. The compulsory semantic components of the imperative are the sign of finality and expressiveness, associated with its affirmative or negative forms. As directional eloquent acts, the statements with the targeted mode are based on two cognitive mechanisms of imperative semantics: the explicit and the implicit ones. In many contexts, the imperative is competed by the conjunctive and the indicative, joining verbal and adverbial modalizers.

God assures Jeremiah that He will not allow the enemies to defeat him, on condition *tie your belt, get up and tell them*, the verbs in the imperative way having the role of announcing the danger rendered through the subordinate sentences *to make you tremble*. The repetition of the verb has the role to underline a fundamental truth, God is sovereign, has solutions, long patience, thus emphasizing a dynamic relationship between the nominal opposition I-God / you.

Seize - cover and cry for your sins, pray, groan before the Lord. The verb introduces the dynamic perspective, but also the obvious semantism in the field of derivation (*to fear, fearless, braveness*).

From the perspective of the phrase syntax, the message conveyed emphasizes the condition and consequence that *I don't somehow make you*, in the translation (Munteanu 2015, 713) the consequence is not rendered, but on the contrary the condition is underlined *Do not to fear them, cause we will not make you afraid of their sight*.

P1 – Do not tremble before them,

P2 – I don't somehow make you. The purpose of the behavior revealed by the verb is achieved in the role of the final / circumstantial sentence of purpose:

P3 – to tremble before them

In Romanian, the topic is important for deciphering the meaning of an utterance, meaning coming from the context, thus, in the verse in Matthew 5:16 "Therefore I say unto you, *Do not care for your soul what ye shall eat*", the Greek verb *μεριμνάω* - 'to be uneasy, to be caring for, to worry, to be disturbed' has been translated with 'to care for', possible meaning for this verb (*μή μεριμνάτε*), but meaning an anxious care, (Pîrvuloiu, 2009, 193).

Jeremiah 5:22: *Should you not fear Me?" declares the LORD. "Should you not tremble in My presence? I made the sand a boundary for the sea, an everlasting barrier it cannot cross. The waves may roll, but they cannot prevail; they may roar, but they cannot cross it*

At the level of discourse, God's invitation to dialogue is made through rhetorical interrogations, questions that remain unanswered. The repetition of the verb *should you not* followed by direct complementary sentences whose predicates are expressed by the verb in the conjunctive way *to*

fear and *tremble* externalize the idea of duration and intensity of the action that takes place over a period of time and is realized through repetitive structures based on coordination through juxtaposition (with comma).

From this context, the inability to understand the greatness of God and the refusal of people to fear from not paying attention and lack of wisdom are apparent. Dependence on evil removes man from God, so he no longer recognizes His authority. Why did God put a border of sand for the sea, the sand that can symbolize fickleness, contempt? The sea in the Middle East symbolized the destructive forces of chaos.

Jeremiah 10:10: *But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is **angry**, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.*

The fear of Divinity is encountered, for the first time, when Adam feels empty, and God calls upon man to raise awareness of the terrible continent of evil to which he freely opened himself to, while losing his freedom. Man's uneasiness and insecurity in the pursuit of Divinity make him feel insecure, so that the feeling of fear takes him away from God.

1.3. The meaning “fright and horror” predetermines the basic semantic roles in the given context, other actants being involved as well: *heavens*.

Jeremiah 2:12: *Be appalled* at this, you heavens, and **shudder with fright** and great horror*****,” declares the LORD. (*Jer. 6:25, **Jer. 6:24 *We have heard reports about them, and our hands hang limp. **Anguish*** has gripped us, pain like that of a woman in labor. v.²⁵ Do not go out to the fields or walk on the roads, for the enemy has a sword, and there is **terror** on every side, 15:8, 50:43)**

The aorist ἐφοβήθη is translated in the 1688 Bible by *becoming frightened, stay stony*, which ‘indicates the feeling of thinning hair due to a strong fear’. The noun *horror* comes from Gr. ἐκστασις, εως and may have the meanings ‘illusion’, ‘terror’, ‘astonishment’, ‘drowsiness’, ‘fright’ (Munteanu 2014, 223).

The added drama of the sense of horror is given by the comparison as the pain of a woman giving birth, which leads us to the verse in Genesis chapter. 3 in which the woman is cursed after she has sinned, therefore this image can be correlated with God's judgment.

Jeremiah 15:8: *I will make their widows more numerous than the sand of the sea. At midday I will bring a destroyer against the mothers of their young men; suddenly I will bring down on them **anguish and terror***

The young man's mother refers to the city, the same term in Hebrew can mean “terror”, “horror”, but also “citadel, city”. Thus, the two notions that express emotions and sensations have different intensities contextually, even if they are expressed through the same semantics.

Jeremiah 4:29: *At the sound of horsemen and archers every town takes to flight. Some go into the thickets; some climb up among the rocks. All the towns are deserted; no one lives in them.*

Jeremiah 46:5: *What do I see? They are **terrified**, they are retreating, their warriors are defeated. They flee in haste without looking back, and there is **terror** on every side,” declares the LORD.*

Feelings of fear, terror or anxiety, if not verbalized, cannot be rectified, because the inner feelings of the soul give rise to behaviors. This externalization of emotions involves, besides the **function of language communication** (through which the contents of the psychic life are externalized, the psychomorphic profile is externalized, other personality traits, the character), **the cognitive function** (which facilitates knowledge and fixes this information in words), but especially **the regulation function** (the change of the behaviors of other people is realized, the language being a means of relaxation, of disconnection).

1.4. The meaning of "turmoil, agitation" is also found in the translation of the Orthodox Bible, rendered also by expressive language with the help of comparison. *Their heart melts with fear; there is a sea in the storm that cannot be quenched.* Comparison can be another way of highlighting the action of the verb, in order to help underline the notion of *fear*.

Jeremiah 49:23: *Concerning Damascus: "Hamath and Arpad are dismayed, for they have heard bad news. They melt with fear, troubled like the restless sea".*

Jeremiah 49:23: *Concerning Damascus: "Hamath and Arpad are dismayed, for they have heard bad news. Their heart melt with fear, there is a sea in the storm that cannot be quenched".*

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, fear means 'deep anxiety and disorder, caused by real or imaginary danger; lack of courage, fear, fright. '* Loc. adj. Without fear = fearless; brave. * Loc. adv. With fear = with fright, being afraid. Without (no) fear = with courage. No fear = certainly not, not at all, once with the head. * Expr. To put fear in (someone's) bones = to scare (someone). To carry one's fear (or something) = a) to be afraid of someone or something; b) be afraid of something bad happening to someone. To carry the fear in the back (or in the breast) = to be in a constant state of anxiety, fear. To fear someone = to listen to someone because you're afraid of him.

The feeling of fear derives from the fight between body and soul, the rupture causing a tension addressed to perception (feeling) and not to understanding (idea). Thus, another determinant of the terms *fear, fright* can be both substantive and verb. The verb rarely appears in the associative structures, and the suspension points are a means of characterization of the character, suggesting a state of fear. Emotions can be associated with rhetorical figures (interrogations, invocations and rhetorical exclamations), considered cognitive by evoking values, but emotional statements involve empathy and participation.

Another lexical difference between the *1688 Bible* and the *Bible* translated by Cornilescu is given by the introduction of the subject expressed by the noun *heart* which, personified, takes over the attributions of those who receive a news that produces fear, the heart being the center of the feelings and *from the depths of the heart the mouth speaks*.

Jeremiah 51:46: *Do not lose heart or be afraid when rumors are heard in the land; one rumor comes this year, another the next, rumors of violence in the land and of ruler against ruler'*

The verbs in the imperative, in this situation, contain a series of unwritten commands regarding an attitude, because man is lost by alienating himself from God, in the mechanism of social relations. The reduced frequency in the associative structure of this phrase is explained by the fact that the verb appears, in general, rarely in the Romanian associative structures as reactions to nouns, probably, and because the nouns in surveys are given in the unarticulated form, and the conjugation with a verb imposes their articulation. The determinants of *fear*, in the associative structures, are: "troubled", "hesitant", "frightened", "restless", "worried", "emotional", "stressed", "tense", "agitated", "scared", "anxious", "panicked", "overwhelmed", "terrified" and so on.

1.5. The lexeme *fear's* Romanian equivalent is *respect*

Jeremiah 10:7: *Who should not fear you, King of the nations? Yours is the fear among all the wise leaders of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like You.*

In the translation (Munteanu 2015, 721) the meanings of 'honor -' fear' are preferred.

Who should not fear you, King of the nations? For Yours in the honor, among all the wise tongues and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like You

It is noteworthy that the subject has a decisive role in changing the meaning, the first semantic component of the statement is one of referential nature, this being given by relating the content of the statement to the denoted situation. Linguist Ion Bărbuță mentions the abstract

character of the subject (the function of identifying the object about which something is said in the statement) and of the predicate (the role of saying something about this identity). Thus, the statement, from the perspective of combining the subject with the predicate, gets to make an assertion, that is to say something in relation to an object that serves as a starting point for communication, (Bărbuță 2008, 66).

If the subject of the verb is a being or a movable thing, the verb realizes a meaning that belongs to the sphere of *emotions*, when the subject is God, lexemes *fear*, *fright* acquire a meaning from the sphere of *relationships*. The commutation of the meaning is also determined by the grammatical value of the term: *not to be afraid* - predicative verb, negative form, active diathesis; *the fear is due* - the verb is to reflexive diathesis, and the studied lexeme has a substantive value, expressing the cognitive attitude of the speaker towards the described state.

1.6. The verb to be afraid in correlation with the verb 'to guard'

A correct vertical relationship (man-God) removes the feeling of fear (Rotaru 2011,4), an idea emphasized also in the New Testament (eg in John 4:18: *In love it is not fear, but perfect love drives away fear, because fear carries with it the punishment, and one who fears is not perfect in love*). We are warned that the ignorance of God leads to this feeling (the verb *do not fear* is rendered by Gr. *μὴ φοβηθῆτε*, in some contexts the verb *to fear φοβέω* appears in correlation with the verb *to guard φυλάσσω*, used in translation in the conjunctive mode), (Irimia 2008: 246). In the same context, in the verse in Ecclesiastes 12:13 (*Let us hear the conclusion of all the teachings: Fear God and keep His commandments. This is the duty of every man.*) the same verbs are imperative, suggesting the connection between the fear of God and observance of His precepts are commanded.

Therefore, we notice that we cannot talk about emotional neutrality when we refer to the feeling of *fear*, *fright*, we have a choice, because the emotional intensity is about relationships, contexts, limits and environment. On the other hand, fear can also be a virtue, being the condition of knowing God (Proverbs 1: 7, *Fear of the Lord is the beginning of science, but fools disregards wisdom and teaching*; Proverbs 9:10). The fear of God is born of faith and has the effect of knowledge and repentance.

The feeling of fear we find in Jeremiah from the moment God calls him into His service, assuring him that He will be with him. This feeling deepens with the attitude of the mocking people (Rotaru 2015, 231-239), but the prophet does not let the fear of people cause him to give up his desire to serve God. From the meeting with Zedekiah (Jeremiah 38: 19-20) that assures him that he will escape alive, it is observed that Zedekiah is encompassed by this feeling, because he does not listen to what God says to him (he has a hardened heart), the Evil one being able to keep him trapped in the chain of fear of people, thus losing the legacy and the throne. On the other hand, Zedekiah is afraid of Jeremiah out of respect for him. Jeremiah has found the source of trust in the Divine Almighty, under whose influence no one can escape. Fear comes from lack of love, faith.

In the selected sequences, at the level of discourse we observe the presence of lexical-grammatical marks by the first person plural auctorial, associated to the subjectivity with cognitive verbs, discursive constructions of emotions using affective marks (exclamations / rhetorical interrogations, interjection, repetition, imperatives, substantive in vocative, constructions, incidents).

2. The phraseological expressions of the given concept

In the Romanian language we find somatic phraseological expressions that also reproduce the concepts of fear / horror / fright. The fact that fear is the strongest of emotions is also confirmed by the integration of the lexeme into linguistic expressions: *to tremble in fear*, *to feel the fear into the bones*, *to have goosebumps*, *to wrinkle the skin of fear*, *to make the hair stand on end*, *to live in fear*, *to chill the blood in the veins*, *to be frightened*, *to be horrified*, *to die of fear / fright*, *to make a half-mouthed statement*, *to seize fear*, *to put one's heart to heart*, *to make oneself shudder*, *to stand on barbed wire*, *to put fear in someone*, *to become small (of fear)*, (Dumistrăcel 2011, 56).

The linguist al. Zugun considers that the verbal expression to chill (or to stay, to stop, to slay, to dilute) the blood in the veins (see the entry vein < Lat. pop. vena) "To be frightened, to be frozen in fear" Is based on the word vein, which retains its Latin meaning of "any blood vessel", meaning both "vein, blood vessel that ensures blood flow from the capillary vessels to the heart" and "artery, blood vessel that ensures blood circulation from the heart to the capillary vessels" (the people of old did not distinguish between the two categories of blood vessels, the difference that the two corresponding neologisms make; the first one having the etymon Fr. *veine* [ven] and Lat. lit. *vena*, and second, Fr. *artère*), (Zugun. 2008, p. 29).

Thus, we notice that fear is associated with the hair, skin, flesh or mouth, with the cold state (as a result of the decrease in temperature, the skin becomes pale, teeth tremble, legs tremble, the skin wrinkles), with the fear of speaking (Bădescu 2011 , 145). Somatic idiomatic expressions render universal concepts, so that in other languages (eg Eng. *Shame*) we find lexemes that refer to parts of the body, fear being a manipulation tool.

Conclusions

There is a whole vocabulary of emotions that helps us express what we feel, but at two opposite poles of human emotions are fear and happiness. Like any emotional state, fear has varying degrees, from insecurity, restlessness, anxiety to panic, terror and overwhelm.

Some synonymic series, in the gradient, perimeter the implications of *fear*:

- at the level of emotion: *restlessness - distress - fear - fright - horror*;
- at the level of feeling: *uncertainty - doubt - alteration of the self*;
- at the state level: *nervousness - sadness - remorse*;
- at the level of consequences: *panic - imbalance - stress*.

The feeling of fear may arise from the uncertainties, so you can become a man without direction, finding a narrowing of the perceptual **field**. **Fear, anger, anxiety** can disrupt human behavior. As we have observed, fear can also be considered an important theme in the Biblical text, being approached dichotomously: the plane of Divinity, on the vertical axis (fear of God) and the plane of relationships, on the horizontal axis (fear of humans).

At the morphological level, the frequency of the verb is observed in the imperative mode, the negative form *do not fear, do not tremble*, structures that express decisive states in relation to those around us, and, on the other hand, the use of the conjunctive mode can substitute the imperative, emphasizing the Christian's attitude of hesitation and uncertainty (*Do not weaken your heart and do not be afraid*).

Therefore, the meaning of the lexeme *fear* has been traced starting from the concrete sense to extended, concrete or abstract meanings, polysemy being possible through semantic, concrete or abstract extension mechanisms. From the selected examples, we find that fear can be an instrument of education, but also manipulation in a community, and God rewards those who overcome fear (Rotaru 2012,7). Repeating certain words can induce fear.

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