



Mesopotamians Experienced Emotions in Unexpected Body Areas

Description

Inquiring of an individual raised in Taiwan where they perceive the locus of their rage, one would likely find them gesturing towards the vicinity of their head or chest. Remarkably, a comparable response can be anticipated from a counterpart residing in Finland. This cross-cultural resonance in the embodiment of emotion is indicative of a universal human experience, transcending geographic boundaries.

However, a temporal excursion back to ancient Mesopotamia might yield decidedly different anatomical associations. Recent examinations of millennia-old Neo-Assyrian texts, spanning the 10th to 7th centuries BCE, reveal that anger was predominantly perceived as situated within the thighs. Such stark divergence invites contemplation about cultural variations in emotional expression.

Heat maps depicting emotions

Heat maps illustrating the localization of anger in modern and Mesopotamian contexts.

(Modern: Lauri Nummenmaa et al., *PNAS*, 2014/Mesopotamian: Lahnakoski et al., *iScience*, 2024)

Indeed, Mesopotamians attributed love and happiness to the liver, anguish to the armpits, and even sexual arousal to the ankles, a notion that seems curious by contemporary standards. Such findings underscore the multifaceted relationship humans share with their bodies in the context of emotional experiences.

Research conducted by cognitive neuroscientist Juha Lahnakoski and colleagues involved a meticulous review of the [Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus](#), cataloguing a variety of emotions alongside their corporeal correlates.

This investigative endeavor has yielded a comprehensive heat map delineating specific body regions associated with 18 emotional states, including envy, pride, and schadenfreude. Importantly, this empirical data illustrates a discernible continuity in the anatomical manifestations of emotion throughout human history.

Nonetheless, the challenges of interpreting ancient lexicons remain formidable. Even as researchers endeavor to refine our understanding, they acknowledge that historical texts cannot wholly encapsulate the lived emotional experiences of individuals.

Advancements in generative language models promise to enhance our comprehension of metaphorical constructs that various cultures employ, thereby enriching our grasp of the intricate interplay between language, emotion, and physiological response.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Embodiment** /ɛm'bɒdɪmənt/ (noun): The representation or expression of something in a tangible form.



2. **Divergence** /daɪ'vɜːrdʒəns/ (noun): A difference or deviation from a common point.
3. **Meticulous** /mə'tɪk.jə.ləs/ (adjective): Showing great attention to detail; very careful and precise.
4. **Correlate** /'kɔːrəleɪt/ (verb): To establish or show a relationship between two things.
5. **Manifestations** /,mænɪfəs'teɪʃənz/ (noun): Physical forms or expressions of something; indications or signs.
6. **Lexicons** /'lɛksɪkənz/ (noun): Dictionaries or word lists; the vocabulary of a language or subject.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. According to the text, where do individuals raised in Taiwan perceive the locus of their rage?
Option: A) Head
Option: B) Chest
Option: C) Thighs
Option: D) Ankles
2. Which body part in ancient Mesopotamia was anger predominantly associated with?
Option: A) Head
Option: B) Chest
Option: C) Thighs
Option: D) Ankles
3. What did Mesopotamians attribute love and happiness to?
Option: A) Head
Option: B) Chest
Option: C) Liver
Option: D) Ankles
4. According to the text, what emotion did Mesopotamians associate with the armpits?
Option: A) Love
Option: B) Happiness
Option: C) Anguish
Option: D) Sexual Arousal
5. In the study mentioned, what emotions were associated with specific body regions?
Option: A) Joy, Sadness, Fear
Option: B) Jealousy, Contentment, Surprise



- Option: C) Envy, Pride, Schadenfreude
Option: D) Curiosity, Excitement, Boredom

6. What did advancements in generative language models promise to enhance?

- Option: A) Cooking techniques
Option: B) Comedic timing
Option: C) Understanding metaphorical constructs
Option: D) Physical fitness

True-False

7. Individuals raised in Finland gesture towards their feet when perceiving rage according to the text.
8. Emotional associations with body parts have remained consistent throughout human history.
9. The challenges of interpreting ancient lexicons are easily surmountable according to researchers.
10. Advancements in generative language models will not impact our comprehension of cultural metaphorical constructs.
11. Ancient Mesopotamians did not attribute any emotional significance to specific body parts.
12. The heat map mentioned in the text delineates specific body regions associated with 10 emotional states.

Gap-Fill

14. In ancient Mesopotamia, sexual arousal was attributed to the _____.
15. The investigative endeavor led to a comprehensive heat map delineating body regions associated with _____ emotional states.
16. Researchers acknowledge that historical texts cannot wholly encapsulate the _____ experiences of individuals.
17. Advancements in generative language models promise to enhance our comprehension of metaphorical constructs by enriching our grasp of the intricate interplay between _____, emotion, and _____.



physiological response.

18. Mesopotamians associated love and happiness with the _____.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. A) Head 2. C) Thighs 3. C) Liver 4. C) Anguish 5. C) Envy, Pride, Schadenfreude
6. C) Understanding metaphorical constructs

True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. False 10. False 11. False 12. False

Gap-Fill: 14. ankles 15. 18 16. lived emotional 17. language 18. liver

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. Which term refers to the proportion of a particular disease or condition in a population at a specific time?

Option: Prevalence

Option: Adherence

Option: Resilience

Option: Heritage

2. Which term describes the body's response to injury or infection characterized by redness swelling and pain?

Option: Adaptability

Option: Inflammation

Option: Thermal

Option: Genomic

3. What term refers to how well a patient follows medical advice and takes prescribed treatments?

Option: Contributions

Option: Adherence

Option: Cognitive

Option: Corroborate

4. Which term means the act of leaving out or not including someone or something?

Option: Contaminants

Option: Exclusion

Option: Divergence

Option: Elucidate



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5. Which term refers to the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties and setbacks?
- Option: Manifestations
 - Option: Intrepid
 - Option: Resilience
 - Option: Cosmology
6. What term relates to the complete set of genes or genetic material present in a cell or organism?
- Option: Correlate
 - Option: Genomic
 - Option: Manifestations
 - Option: Divergence
7. Which term describes a sudden and violent event with harmful effects?
- Option: Inflationary
 - Option: Preservation
 - Option: Cataclysmic
 - Option: Thermal
8. What term means the process of separating and going in different directions?
- Option: Contaminants
 - Option: Intrepid
 - Option: Lexicons
 - Option: Divergence
9. Which term refers to the display or demonstration of a particular action or object?
- Option: Cosmology
 - Option: Preservation
 - Option: Contaminants
 - Option: Manifestations
10. What term means to confirm or give support to a statement theory or finding?
- Option: Intrepid
 - Option: Corroborate
 - Option: Intermingled
 - Option: Meticulous

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. _____ diseases are characterized by the progressive degeneration of the structure and function of the nervous system.



12. _____ is the ability to adjust to new conditions or environmental changes.
13. _____ is the study of the origin evolution and eventual fate of the universe.
14. _____ energy is energy derived from heat.
15. _____ are substances that make something impure by adding harmful or unwanted elements.
16. An _____ explorer fearlessly embarks on dangerous or unknown journeys.
17. The professor sought to _____ complex scientific concepts for the students.
18. The team acknowledged the valuable _____ made by each member to the project.
19. Preserving cultural _____ is essential for passing down traditions to future generations.
20. Scientists aim to _____ different variables to understand their relationship.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. The mystery novel had a plot full of twists and turns that kept readers engaged.
22. of historical sites is crucial to maintain their cultural significance.
23. can be harmful if not properly shielded against in certain environments.
24. She was known for her attention to detail in every aspect of her work.
25. Different cultures have unique that reflect their language and history.
26. explores the nature of the universe including its origin and development.
27. The flavors of the spices were so well that it created a delicious blend.
28. development in children involves processes such as thinking learning and problem-solving.
29. An economy experiences a rapid increase in prices.



30. Her elegant posture and graceful movements were the of sophistication.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Prevalence 2. Inflammation 3. Adherence 4. Exclusion 5. Resilience 6. Genomic
7. Cataclysmic 8. Divergence 9. Manifestations 10. Corroborate

Gap-Fill: 11. Neurodegenerative 12. Adaptability 13. Cosmology 14. Thermal 15. Contaminants 16. Intrepid
17. Elucidate 18. Contributions 19. heritage 20. Correlate

Matching sentence: 1. Intriguing 2. Preservation 3. Radiation 4. Meticulous 5. Lexicons 6. Cosmology
7. Intermingled 8. Cognitive 9. Inflationary 10. Embodiment

CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL6

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