

# Traces of “crystallized” conceptual metaphors in ancient Indo-European languages: the relationship of language with space and body

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**Abstract:** The paper aims to discuss some cases of metaphorical linguistic expressions in some ancient Indo-European languages, in order to show how conceptual metaphors (in the sense of Lakoff and Johnson 1980) “materialize” in certain linguistic expressions through the use of concepts such as spatiality and embodiment. Furthermore, it will be observed that in some circumstances it is possible to imagine, for the reconstructed linguistic phase, a polysemy of certain Proto-Indo-European (PIE) roots – usually interpreted as homonymic – precisely by virtue of the metaphorical logic mentioned above. We shall also consider the idea of a one-to-one correspondence between form and function of a linguistic sign and that of an intrinsic “naturalness” and “transparency”, in the light of more general processes of linguistic change.

**Key words:** naturalness theory, conceptual metaphors, linguistic change, ancient Indo-European languages, semantics.