

# Metaphorical Insights into Human Psychology in Jane Eyre

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**Abstract:** The article delves into the analysis of metaphors that characterize the psychological states of individuals. The primary focus is on structures that reflect the spiritual experiences of the main characters in the work, namely Jane Eyre, Rochester, and Lord Soules. It is acknowledged that each of these characters possesses unique traits, and this, incidentally, plays a pivotal role in shaping the ideological theme of the novel.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely recognized that the physical and mental state of poets and writers significantly influences their creative activity—a point noted by numerous literary critics (see: Freeman 1995, 2000, 2007). Similarly, the speaker's personal attitude and interest in reality also play a role in shaping the process of metaphor formation.

Left as a very young orphan, Jane lives in constant struggle, growing into a young woman fiercely defending her identity. This educated girl works as a governess in Thornfield, embracing a lively life while remaining polite and moral. Rochester, seemingly cold and ironic due to the scars of his first marriage, exudes warmth and charm. Lord John, on the other hand, develops an affection for Jane, serving as her religious patroness and godmother. He is characterized by persistence, stubbornness, extreme emotionality, cold-bloodedness, and wisdom, always ready to support the less fortunate.


## 2. MAIN PART


Jane's attitude toward life is largely reflected in the structures formed on the basis of the conceptual metaphor "LIFE is a JOURNEY," and these structures undergo structural changes throughout the novel. Jane's journey in this conceptual metaphor


continually expands the qualities she attributes to the concept of "journey," and its form changes:

"It is a very strange sensation for inexperienced youth to feel itself quite alone in the world, adrift from every connection, uncertain whether the port it is bound for can be reached, and prevented by many impediments from returning to what it has left." (Chapter 11, 86).

Jane is leaving for Thornfield to work as a governess. During the eight years she spent in Lowood, she was completely cut off from the world: "...had had no communication by letter or message with the outer world" (p. 77). Now she is gripped by a passion for free breathing, but at the same time, she is far from being able to fully imagine the future. This distrust of the future is reflected in the conceptual metaphor "LIFE is a JOURNEY." More precisely, "cut adrift" refers to travel, the way to the sea, to elements such as "go with the flow," "port," "quit." While traveling by sea, the direction and purpose erode from the mind of a traveler who has fallen into a stream and is floating freely (in the direction where the water flows). In harmony, the illusion of freedom and emancipation alternates with the fear of being lost. With the loss of direct contact with the outside world, the confidence that they will reach their destination weakens. Therefore, due to the fact that the journey has already begun, it is almost impossible to go back.

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Here, the semantic resource—the concept of "JOURNEY"—expands to the concept of "LIFE" in Jane's mind. In Jane's eyes, life is a journey, and this journey takes place alone, in insecure conditions. However, it is impossible to retreat, as the decision was made to leave Lowood and meet with another world, with other people.

It is clear that the conceptual metaphor given here fully demonstrates Jane's vision of life. Youth and inexperience encourage imagining life as lonely and purposeless. The same semantic content finds expression in another metaphor: "Alas, this isolation—this banishment from my kind! Not only the anchor of hope, but the footing of fortitude was gone" (p. 321).

Upon arrival at Thornfield, Jane is greeted by Mrs. Fairfax, a house servant, and her pupil Adele, a French girl. She describes her work as "I was now at last in safe haven" (p. 90). It is also a phrase based on the conceptual metaphor "LIFE is a JOURNEY." However, a blameless and easy life does not always satisfy Jane:

"To spend the long winter evening with her, and her only, was to quell wholly the faint excitement wakened by my walk—to slip again over my faculties the viewless fetters of a uniform and too still existence; of an existence whose very privileges of security and ease I was becoming incapable of appreciating. What good it would have done me at that time to have been tossed in the storms of an uncertain struggling life, and to have been taught by rough and bitter experience to long for the calm amidst which I now repined!" (Chapter 12, 108).

The conceptual metaphor mentioned above is activated again, and the journey once more consists of sailing on the sea. The frame of the metaphor is expanded by adding nodes like "small boat," "tossed," "storm." Tired of the easy life, the silence in Thornfield, Jane imagines this life as a man standing on his feet. Therefore, in combination, she does not forget that such calmness should be appreciated. Being in a temporary environment, in the conditions of a sea voyage, a small boatman (Jane imagines herself to be just like that) is not so pleased to meet a storm and look for a way to navigate through it.

Let's move on to the analysis of the following passage:

"Yesterday I trusted well in Providence, and believed that events were working together for your good and mine: it was a fine day, if you recollect—

the calmness of the air and sky forbade apprehensions respecting your safety or comfort on your journey. I walked a little while on the pavement after tea, thinking of you; and I beheld you in imagination so near me, I scarcely missed your actual presence. I thought of the life that lay before me—your life, sir—an existence more expansive and stirring than my own: as much more so as the depths of the sea to which the brook runs are than the shallows of its own strait channel." (Chapter 25, 267).

The month of hunting is over, and on one of the fast days, Jane is going to marry Rochester. In Rochester's absence, who has gone to find out the news from small farms, Jane is worried and excited about the expected changes in her life. Walking through the park, she thinks about Rochester. Jane, who compares her life to Rochester's, makes life look like a river. At the same time, the directions of the metaphorical mind take those manifestations that are under them:

Depth of sea to which the brook runs → the depth of Rochester's life;

Shallows of strait channel → the shallowness of Jane's life;

Expansive and stirring → rich life experience, exciting life experience.

In the conceptual framework of the metaphor, Rochester's life is compared to the sea, through which little fuel passes, while Jane's life is compared to shallow water in the channel bed. This quality is a metaphorical contradiction, which, on the one hand, shows Jane's respect and passion for Rochester, and on the other hand, signals her humility. A metaphor of the same appearance, of course, informs the inevitability of achieving the goal of marriage.

But it's not always easy to capture the dream. After finding out that Rochester has another wife and that this mad wife is locked in a house on the third floor, Jane leaves Thornfield. But Jane, wandering around the neighboring district of Whitcross, does not despair, despite hunger and exhaustion. On the contrary, she believes in Allah and expects encouragement from him. Compare:

"Life, however, was yet in my possession, with all its requirements, and pains, and responsibilities. The burden must be carried; the want provided for; the suffering endured; the responsibility fulfilled. I set out." (Chapter 28, 311).

Rochester's metaphorical contemplative activity is associated with a bitter, traumatic life experience. In his youth, Bertha took care of Mason and married him, which made Rochester dissatisfied with his life.

As a result, he got used to being ironic and cold to others, despising the injustice of life and fate. Such a life, without words, does not satisfy anyone. Psychologists define "life trauma" as a means of alienation from the beauty and life-giving landscapes of the world (Janoff-Bulman 1992: 6). Mental trauma affects a person's mood, activity, and worldview, which manifests itself. An example of this is the content of the metaphors that define Rochester's attitude to life:

"I started, or rather (for like other defaulters, I like to lay half the blame on ill fortune and adverse circumstances) was thrust onto a wrong tack at the age of one-and-twenty, and have never recovered the right course since..." (Chapter 14, 126).

These lines are an example of a conversation between Rochester and Jane. In response to Jane's sarcasm, Rochester admits that there are no deviations from reality in his behavior. In his response, Rochester, commenting on his life experience, claims that the path of life is not his choice but dictated by God (bad luck). As you know, it is better that the life path leads to some good result, and it consists of a triad of source-direction-goal. To achieve the goal, you need to choose the right direction. So, the metaphor that Rochester uses sounds like this: "life is a journey forced onto a wrong way."

Rochester is easily ranked among tragic characters, and his first marriage is the cause of the tragedy. Although it is difficult to get detailed information about his previous life from the work, from his conversation with Jane, one can understand how depressed his outlook on life is. This attitude and worldview are manifested in the following metaphorical expressions:

a) Rochester's memories of his shameful relationship with the French dancer Celine:

"I had not, it seems, the originality to chalk out a new road to shame and destruction but trod the old track with stupid exactness not to deviate an inch from the beaten center." (p. 132).

In these lines, he portrays his life as a journey that follows the same path again. This story had already led him to Bertha Mason. The consequence is nothing but shame and dissatisfaction;

b) Rochester's confession, ending with Jane's departure:

"Divine justice pursued its course; disasters came thick on me: I was forced to pass through the valley

of the shadow of death. His chastisements are mighty, and one smote me which has humbled me forever." (p. 430).

In this case, life without Jane faces a catastrophe that is coming in search of her. This, in turn, is an allusion to the punishment incurred for his actions.

The fact that the conceptual metaphor "LIFE is a JOURNEY" underlies all of the above metaphors does not arouse suspicion. It is also known that a journey, as we said earlier, has a start, middle, and end points. Different directions are sometimes right, while the rest are wrong.

In another passage of the novel's text, Rochester's attitude toward life takes on a special look:

"You think all existence lapses in as quiet a flow as that in which your youth has hitherto slid away. Floating on with closed eyes and muffled ears, you neither see the rocks bristling not far off in the bed of the flood nor hear the breakers boil at their base. But I tell you—and you may mark my words—you will come some day to a craggy pass in the channel, where the whole of life's stream will be broken up into whirl and tumult, foam and noise: either you will be dashed to atoms on crag points or lifted up and borne on by some master-wave into a calmer current—as I am now." (Chapter 15, 133).

Talking to Jane, Rochester wants to share his rich life experience with her. As a man burned by a bitter fate, he wants to warn Jane about many things. The metaphor "LIFE is a JOURNEY" is developing, warning the interlocutor that life is no longer the same. According to its pattern, the river of life flows unevenly, quietly: "rocks bristling not far off in the bed"; "breakers boil at the base"; "craggy pass in the channel."

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Researchers argue that the metaphorical shift is not complete; instead, the transition from the source to the intended content will be partial. Consequently, one or another part of the reported information may be omitted (Lakoff, Johnson 2003). Despite this, a person can act in their own way, reflect, without being under the pressure of metaphors or other linguistic phenomena. In contrast, Rochester has become the "prey" of a metaphor that gives his life full partial coverage. For this reason, the significance of the path to the river, reflected in the metaphors he uses, emphasizes the dangers and obstacles on the path of

life. All this indicates Rochester's depressed mood and a hopeless outlook.

Consider another example:

"To live, for me, Jane, is to stand on a crater-crust which may crack and spew fire any day." (Chapter 20, 205).

In this oratorical structure, the metaphorical attitude to life is unique, with the source being the crater-crust. This source is influenced by the fact that Bertha had set fire to his room the night before. Consequently, the content of the metaphor is related to the fire that occurred the day before, and the word "crater" itself has an associative connection with concepts like glowing rock, fire, and smoke. This metaphor evokes images of hell and alludes to the fire-breathing monster in folklore. According to Rochester, his wife is akin to such creatures, and being in the presence of such a volcano is always dangerous for her husband.

Rochester continues to describe his life of suffering:

"Well then, Jane, call to aid your fancy:—suppose you were no longer a girl well reared and disciplined, but a wild boy indulged from childhood upwards; imagine yourself in a remote foreign land; conceive that you there commit a capital error, no matter of what nature or from what motives, but one whose consequences must follow you through life and taint all your existence. Mind, I don't say a crime; I am not speaking of shedding of blood or any other guilty act, which might make the perpetrator amenable to the law: my word is error. The results of what you have done become in time to you utterly insupportable; you take measures to obtain relief: unusual measures, but neither unlawful nor culpable. Still, you are miserable; for hope has quitted you on the very confines of life: your sun at noon darkens in an eclipse, which you feel will not leave it till the time of setting..." (Chapter 20, 206).

In this passage, Rochester shares his suffering with Jane, recounting the hardships of his youth. Here, a conceptual metaphor is fitting: LIFE IS A DAY. The metaphor conveys the stages of life equated to the phases of a day. The sun represents a source of a bright sense of self, noon symbolizes the peak of life, sunset signifies death, and darkness refers to an injury preventing one from feeling like oneself. Rochester's depressed attitude toward life is explained by the metaphor, indicating that the injury from his youth haunts him for the rest of his life, distancing the bright pages of life from him.

Saint John's thoughts about life are connected with his religious position. Choosing Jane as his wife during his missionary journey, John Rivers, an ambitious and dignified man, abandoned her and left for India, where he spent the rest of his life. His attitude towards life is different from that of Jane and Rochester. Compare:

"It is hard work to control the workings of inclination and turn the bent of nature; but that it may be done, I know from experience. God has given us, in a measure, the power to make our own fate; and when our energies seem to demand sustenance they cannot get—when our will strains after a path we may not follow—we need neither starve from inanition nor stand still in despair: we have but to seek another nourishment for the mind, as strong as the forbidden food it longed to taste—and perhaps purer; and to hew out for the adventurous foot a road as direct and broad as the one Fortune has blocked up against us, if rougher than it." (Chapter 31, 347).

Lord Rivers, unlike Rochester, believes in God and that any test can be overcome with divine help. His metaphorical expression, "LIFE - is a JOURNEY with objects," suggests that obstacles are inevitable, and everyone must face them, including those falling into involuntary slaughter, destined to leave. Lord Rivers emphasizes the importance of not despairing but seeking the right path, believing that the journey, though difficult, leads smoothly to the destination.

In another narrative structure, he states that "life is a long way to go":

"I am the servant of an infallible Master. I am not going out under human guidance, subject to the defective laws and erring control of my feeble fellow-worms: my king, my lawgiver, my captain, is the All-perfect. It seems strange to me that all round me do not burn to enlist under the same banner,—to join in the same enterprise." "All have not your powers, and it would be folly for the feeble to wish to march with the strong." (Chapter 34, 386).

Lord Rivers expresses pride in going on a missionary trip to India as an "infallible Master", "not... human guidance, defective laws and erring control... feeble fellow-worms." His metaphor compares the future missionary life to a massive activity sponsored by the Creator, using high-style units like "banner", "join", "march". The metaphor is an attempt to encourage Jane to leave with him.

Cognitive scientists assert that an extraordinary metaphor has an inner power that shapes and reflects

our experience, rapidly impacting the listener's consciousness. The metaphor used by John Rivers has the same content, conveying the idea that a purposeful, strong person who acts according to plan can walk the path of life and achieve their dreams:

“It is just what I want. And there are obstacles in the way: they must be hewn down.” (Chapter 34, 392).

This narrative structure also states that "life is a long way to go". In total, there are 36 metaphors reflecting the characters' attitudes towards life in the novel, with different meaningful connotations.

Table 1: Metaphors that reflect the attitude towards life in the speech of the heroes of the novel.

Metaphors of attitude to life ( total number 36)	Jane Eyre (14)	Edward Rochester (12)	St. John Rivers (10 )
Journey "road, journey" (without purpose and control)	8	2	0
Journey "road, journey" (dangerous)	0	2	0
Journey “йўл, сафар” (forward or backward)	2	0	1
Journey "road, journey" (in the right or wrong direction)	0	3	0
Journey "road, journey" (in the face of difficulties)	0	1	4
Journey "road, journey" (aimless)	0	0	5
Journey "road, journey" (fight)	1	1	0
Journey "road, journey" (persecution)	1	2	0
Life is a book	1	0	0
Life is a river	1	0	0
Life is a day	0	1	0

The table reveals that the most frequent metaphor regarding Jane's attitude toward life in her speech is the concept "life is a journey without a goal and without control" (8 instances). However, most of these metaphors are articulated in the initial part of the novel, specifically depicting the pathetic image of Jane in an orphanage. The metaphors conveying Rochester's perspective on life fall into three categories: (a) "life is an aimless journey," (b) "life is

a journey in the wrong direction," and (c) "life is exile." On the contrary, Lord John describes his life using metaphors of "aimless travel" and "life is a path to difficulties."

Jane's metaphors about life exhibit a more detailed exploration compared to the metaphors used by other characters. These metaphors figuratively embody various aspects and stages of life. Firstly, this suggests that the narrator (Jane) intends to convey her spiritual experiences about life in a more thorough manner than the other characters. Secondly, it implies that the speaker is an optimist, possessing an optimistic psyche. The diversity of metaphors used after puberty indicates Jane's increased life experience. Now, she approves of being "tossed in the storms of an uncertain struggling life" (Chapter 12, 108), feeling as "a wanderer on the face of the earth" (Chapter 21, 216), and expressing doubt about having taken a step that degraded her social existence (Chapter 31, 344).

Rochester's chosen life metaphors are also rooted in his experience, reflecting the speaker's depressed state and his perception of planning life as a dangerous journey. Rochester describes life as a continuous cycle where "no sooner have you got settled in a pleasant resting-place, than a voice calls out to you to rise and move on, for the hour of repose is expired" (Chapter 23, 237). Such metaphors are a manifestation of bitter life experience.

St. John Rivers' speech, while less rich in metaphors, predominantly revolves around an exposition of aimless life stages and the difficulties that may be encountered. Although the metaphors used by John also convey the conceptual meaning of "life is an aimless journey," the speaker is cognizant of existing obstacles and has not lost hope of overcoming them.

Experts assert that narrative statements can be categorized into three types: stability, progressiveness, and regressiveness (Gergen 1998). In a stable presentation, events are interconnected in a way that maintains an unchanged goal or result, reflecting an optimistic outlook on life. Conversely, a regressive statement signifies a diminishing impact of shocks in the speech. Such statements aim to captivate the listener's attention, prioritizing the goal of eliciting compassion.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Following the distribution of the narrative types mentioned above, we categorize Jane's style of speech as progressive, while Rochester's style leans towards the regressive type. St. John's speech, on the other hand, exhibits a stable appearance. In essence, Jane's speech exudes a sense of confidence in life, a desire to share successes with others, and thereby gain respect. Rochester, in contrast, harbors only the desire to evoke compassion in Jane, reflecting a depressed psyche in his attitude toward life. Finally, Lord John's speech echoes his commitment to religious responsibility.

Consequently, through the analysis of the metaphors employed in the speech of the main characters of the novel, it becomes evident that these phrases not only reflect their attitudes toward life but also contribute to the formation of similar metaphorical constructs. Specifically, the expanding content of metaphorical phrases used by Jane is a product of the development of her cognitive abilities, rooted in the growth of her life experience.

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