

# Mediaeval and Modern Metaphorical Concepts of Emotions

## Summary

This article aims to study emotion metaphors found in a selection of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and compare them with conventional modern metaphors from current dictionaries and other sources, in order to find out whether mediaeval emotional metaphorical concepts have survived to the present day and, if so, what changes can be perceived in them. The study is based on the cognitive theory of metaphor, as developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) in *Metaphors We Live By*.

Key words: emotion metaphors, conventional metaphors, modern metaphors, mediaeval metaphors, metaphorical concepts, cognitive theory of metaphor

# Srednjeveški in sodobni metaforični koncepti emocij

## Povzetek

Prispevek proučuje emotivne metafore v izboru Chaucerjevih *Canterburyjskih povesti* in jih primerja s konvencionalnimi sodobnimi metaforami iz sodobnih slovarjev in drugih virov ter tako raziskuje, ali so srednjeveški koncepti emotivnih metafor preživeli do danes in kakšne spremembe lahko zaznamo v njih. Raziskava temelji na kognitivni teoriji metafor, ki sta jo razvila George Lakoff in Mark Johnson (1980) v delu *Metaphors We Live By*.

Ključne besede: emotivne metafore, konvencionalne metafore, sodobne metafore, srednjeveške metafore, metaforični koncepti, kognitivna teorija metafor

# Mediaeval and Modern Metaphorical Concepts of Emotions

## 1. Introduction

Metaphors have proved to be a valuable device in conceiving of the world, as well as in efforts to express it. In spite of that, they have rarely been used to investigate the changes that might have taken place in the human mind over a considerable length of time. Admittedly, we lack historical corpora that would enable us to grasp metaphorical concepts existing in the distant past. Historical dictionaries, with digital word counts, are almost useless for the purpose, as metaphors are most often idioms and phrases of diverse structure and vocabulary, and cannot be understood out of context. However, we can always investigate samples of old literature and compare them with today's materials, in order to draw some conclusions about the issue, no matter how incomplete the data might be.

For this purpose we carried out research on metaphors of emotion in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, specifically in the "General Prologue," "the Knight's Tale," "the Miller's Prologue and Tale," "the Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale," and "the Second Nun's Prologue and Tale." The primary objective was to find out which concepts mediaeval metaphors were based on and how they were expressed, and the secondary was to see how many of the mediaeval metaphorical concepts found are still creative in the minds of English speakers. For modern metaphorical expressions we referred mostly to *Metaphors We Live By* and *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (Lakoff 1987), the Concise Oxford Thesaurus, the Cambridge International Dictionary of English, and other dictionaries.

Regarding corpus collection, it might seem that we attempted to compare the incomparable, since metaphors in the *Canterbury Tales* are the product of artistic fantasy, while those taken from modern dictionaries are conventional, that is, created and used mostly by common people in written and spoken language. Nevertheless, we believe that the Tales are suitable for such research for several reasons. Firstly, they were composed more than five hundred years ago, and that is a considerable length of time for changes in the mind, if indeed there are any, to show. Then they are composed in vernacular English, the native language used naturally in informal situations. Additionally, the storytellers come from different social strata and represent almost the whole of contemporary English society: the aristocracy, the middle class and the Church; and, no less importantly, they express both masculine and feminine contemporary attitudes.

## 2. Scientific Foundation

The starting point in our research was the cognitive theory of metaphor, as elaborated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in *Metaphors We Live By*. It claims that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (3). Accordingly, metaphor is not a purely linguistic device, used mostly in literature for stylistic purposes and by especially talented individuals, but primarily a cognitive process, used effortlessly by ordinary people in common situations, and expressed by means of language. As such, it necessarily includes two constituents: a metaphorical concept, by means of which we experience one kind of things in terms of another, and a metaphorical expression, by which we convey the underlying concept through language. Since one of the general properties of language is its productivity, we are able to express one and the same metaphorical concept in many ways. In other words, the notion which we try to grasp, that is, the target, can be

understood in terms of several different notions or sources. Moreover, we can understand one and the same notion by means of several different metaphorical concepts. Metaphorical concepts can roughly be classified according to their function into ontological, structural and orientational concepts. Briefly, by ontological metaphors, immaterial objects, such as events, activities, emotions, ideas etc., are viewed as material ones; by structural metaphors, one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another; and, by orientation metaphors, certain notions are viewed in terms of human orientation in physical space, such as up-down, in-out, front-back, deep-shallow, central-peripheral.

The purpose of metaphor is the better understanding of notions, especially abstract ones, such as emotions. They appear to be much more difficult to grasp than material ones, and subsequently our perception of them is often vague and diverse. As emotions represent an important part of human life, many artists, philosophers, art historians, linguists, psychologists, sociologists and neuroscientists have taken an interest in them. Nevertheless, because of their complex nature, as well as because of the different perspectives and experiences of those who have dealt with them, various definitions of emotions have emerged so far. The contemporary definition, which interprets emotion as a subjective conscious experience with mental and neurophysiological expressions, is not conclusive, but encompasses different aspects and theories from different research domains. This vagueness of definition is the reason why many synonyms for *emotion* have been used to date, such as *feeling*, *affect*, *sensibility*, *sentiment*, *passion* and *fervour*; but, according to current psychological studies, none of these is completely equivalent to emotion. There has also been the stumbling block of a set of basic emotions. Several classifications have appeared, among which the most frequently cited is that of the psychologist Paul Ekman (1984, 1992), which encompasses six primary emotions: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness and surprise.

Some psychologists claim that the number of basic emotions can be reduced to two only, such as pain and pleasure (Mowrer), or happiness and sadness (Weiner and Graham), while some others, like Plutchik, Arnold, McDougall, Tomkins and Izard, have identified many more, up to eleven (Arnold), as we read in Ortony and Turner (1990, 316). The differences in opinion are due to the fact that some scientists do not perceive certain emotions, called compound or complex emotions, as clearly separate, but as combinations of a few primary emotions. So, for example, love is understood as a combination of affection, lust and longing, and anger as a mixture of irritation, rage, disgust, torment, envy etc.

As has been mentioned, linguists have also shown great interest in emotions. Some of them, especially those engaged in cross-cultural linguistics, have noticed that psychologists, in their efforts to identify fundamental and universal human emotions, have based their theories on research performed mostly among speakers of the English language and have neglected Whorf's general idea that differences in language structure have caused people to view the world differently. Anna Wierzbicka (1999) provides evidence that "the way people interpret their own emotions depends, to some extent, at least, on the lexical grid provided by their native language" (26). Thus, for example, "the conceptual categories of sadness or anger are highly relevant to the speakers of English, and also to the speakers of other languages which have words corresponding in meaning to the English words *sad* and *angry* or *sadness* and *anger*" (27), but the speakers of other languages may have different concepts of these emotions. This does not mean that universals do not exist: only that they can be reached merely on the basis of empirical findings from a great number of languages. Such an approach to emotional concepts has encouraged a great number of synchronic studies.

Some diachronic studies have appeared, too, focusing mostly on the semantics of emotional concepts in particular languages in the last few centuries. Our article, however, deals with English language

and culture in the period from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, and explores the metaphorical side of emotional concepts.

### 3. Organization of the Text

In our selection of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* we found about sixty metaphors that express a wide range of emotions, such as love, happiness, unhappiness, lust, disgust, jealousy, rage, sorrow, blame, pity and fear. All of them are elaborated in the next section, according to the three specific types of metaphors in Lakoff and Johnson's classification. So Subsection 1 deals with ontological metaphors, Subsection 2 with structural metaphors, and Subsection 3 with orientational metaphors. Since the creativity of the human mind and language is unlimited, as has been said, it is not surprising that most of the emotions mentioned are expressed through all three types of metaphor.

In each subsection we move from major to minor metaphors, that is, from metaphorical concepts common to several emotions to metaphorical concepts typical of particular emotions, attaching to each concept illustrative example(s) from the *Canterbury Tales* and modern example(s), if available. Metaphorical concepts are given in capital letters, examples from Modern English in italics, and quotations from the *Canterbury Tales* inside quotation marks (with line numbers added in brackets), but in our own translation. Although many Modern English translations of the *Canterbury Tales* exist, in some of them original Middle English metaphors are replaced by modern ones, or even dropped, in order to make the translation more accessible to modern readers. As our intention was primarily to study Chaucer's original metaphors, we translated them word by word.

Some metaphorical examples in the following section are actually metonymies, but since metonymy can be defined as a subtype of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 35-40), metonymic examples are neither separated from metaphors nor elaborated any further.

We must also point out that in the text we do not label emotions according to any of the above-mentioned classifications, but use quite general terms, as common people do in everyday life. Although there are some objective conceptual differences between particular emotions, for example, sadness and distress, or joy and happiness, as shown by Wierzbicka (1999, 51), the fact is that ordinary people (or even scientists) sometimes label the same emotion with two different terms. So we are aware that some readers may consider the emotion we classify as unhappiness to be pain, or the feeling we label as anger to be rage, etc.

Additionally, instead of *emotion*, we occasionally use the term *feeling* or even *emotional state*. Actually, most English dictionaries subsume under the item *emotion*, for example: a strong *feeling* such as love and anger, or strong *feelings* in general (Cambridge Dictionaries Online), a strong *feeling*, such as love, anger, joy, hate, or fear (Merriam Webster), a strong *feeling* deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others (Oxford Dictionaries), etc.

## 4. Mediaeval versus Modern Metaphors

### 4.1 Ontological Metaphors

The CONTAINER METAPHOR, one of the major ontological metaphors, appears to be basic in the conceptualizing of various emotional states in the *Canterbury Tales*, such as jealousy, happiness, rage, sorrow etc. We actually find two types of this metaphor: one relying on the concept that *a person is a container (of emotions)*, and the other relying on the concept that *emotion is the container* in which a person is, typically, immersed or placed.

The former is noticeable, for example, in the “Miller’s Tale,” when Alison warns her young lover that her husband is “full of jealousy” (3294), or in the “Nun’s Prologue,” when the Nun invokes the Virgin Mary with “o, thou, full of grace” (67). Both expressions show that a person who experiences an intense emotion is generally understood as a *full* container. The container can be filled with solid substance, gas or fluid. In the “Knight’s Tale,” the noble widows label the cruel King Creon, who killed their husbands, as “ireful” (940) and plead with Duke Theseus: “let our sorrow sink in your heart” (951). Obviously, Theseus is presented here as a container full of fluid.

The other concept, *emotion is the container*, can be observed in the expression from the “Wife of Bath’s Tale” that “his heart was bathing in a bath of bliss” (1253), where happiness is understood as a container of liquid in which the Wife’s hero is immersed.

Nevertheless, the presence of emotions is also often viewed as location in a BOUNDED SPACE. Typically, when an emotion exists, the person is in that space. This is firmly rooted in human experience of living in the open, since a territory or land area has been seen as a container; and, consequently, everything within or outside it is actually thought of as being within or outside the container. Thus, in the “Knight’s Tale,” young Arcita regrets he has been released from prison, saying, “Then I had been in bliss, and not in woe” (1230), and Chaucer himself, apologizing for the Miller’s rude story, begs his fellows: “put me out of blame” (3185). The origin of such understanding of emotions lies in our experience with physical objects, especially our own bodies. Lakoff and Johnson put it simply, as: “Each of us is a container, with a bounding surface, and in-out orientation” (1980, 29). Apparently, the container and bounded-space concepts are nowadays still creative, and are expressed in numerous idioms, such as: *The sight filled them with joy, She couldn’t contain her rage any longer, They are deeply in love, She was in an angry mood*, etc.

However, there are types of ontological metaphors other than container or bounded space that allow us to understand emotions as separate entities that can be identified, referred to, or quantified in various ways. Sorrow, pity or love, for example, are viewed as material objects that can be possessed, given, sent or bought at a high price. The Wife’s young husband thus, having named a series of evil women, concludes in the “Prologue” that “husbands always have sorrow” (756), and the Roman officer Maximus in the “Second Nun’s Tale” “wept for pity that he had” (371), while the Knight ends his story happily with the following words: “So God ... / Has sent to him his love so dearly bought” (3099-100).

The lines from the “Miller’s Prologue,” “May he find God’s plenty there, he shouldn’t inquire of the rest” (3165-6), show the conceptualization of a woman’s love as a material substance that can be divided among her lovers, with a certain remainder. Nowadays, love and sorrow are still spoken of in similar ways, judging from the following examples: *have a love, hold dear, bear love to, take pity on, and givelsend her my love*.

A specific subtype of ontological metaphor used in the *Canterbury Tales* to express emotional states or their changes is personification. Describing the change from fury to calm in the heart of Theseus, the Knight says, “his ire has thus gone” (1782), and adds, “for pity runs soon in a gentle heart” (1761). Apparently, CHANGE OF EMOTION is perceived as MOTION. Actually, the very word ‘emotion’ comes from Latin *emovere*, “move out, remove, agitate”.

Emotions, such as love, possess typically human features, thus “love is free” (1606), as Arcita says. Theseus finds out that love “brings” Arcita and Palamon to Athens to die as if they were blind: “yet has love, in spite of their eyes, brought them back here” (1796-7). The very emotion of happiness is often conceptualized in the shape of Fortune, the goddess of happiness, as, for example, in the “Knight’s

Tale,” where the noble widows stop Theseus, saying, “Lord, to whom Fortune has given Victory” (915). On the other hand, misfortune is thought of as caused by the evil influence of Saturn. Thus, Arcita explains to Palamon: “Some wicked aspect or configuration of Saturn / . . . Has given this to us” (1087-9). Likewise, love is personified in Cupid, whom Chaucer, in the same tale, names a ruler: “O Cupid, out of all charity! / O rule, where no compeer is allowed to be!” (1623-4)

## 4.2 Structural Metaphors

A whole range of pleasant and unpleasant emotions, like anger, love, jealousy, pain, suffering and shame, are conceived of as heat or fire. Generally speaking, it emerges that WEAK EMOTIONS ARE WARMTH and STRONG EMOTIONS ARE FIRE. The concepts have arisen directly from our bodily experience, that is, from physical reactions triggered by emotions, such as higher blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, increased body temperature, etc. The reactions vary in intensity from emotion to emotion, and from person to person, but are definitely easiest to notice when anger turns into RAGE, since increased body temperature is shown as REDNESS IN THE FACE AND NECK. The expressions of anger and rage in the *Canterbury Tales* are also based on this concept, but, interestingly, we find them in the descriptions of classical gods and goddesses who are all personified and therefore share typical human features. So, in the “Knight’s Tale,” Ira, the goddess of rage and revenge, is depicted as “red as burning coal” (1997). Similarly, the god of war, known for his bad temper and terrible rage, is also painted red: “The red statue of Mars” (975). Modern expressions of anger and rage, based on the same concept, are, among others: *He’s a hothead, Don’t get hot under the collar, She was scarlet with rage, He got red with anger*, etc.

Not only rage, but the strong feeling of SHAME, too, can easily be recognized in one’s face. Thus, the Wife’s young husband’s face was “often red and hot” (540), because she used to reveal his secrets to her close friends.

The concept LOVE/DESIRE IS FIRE is no less common. The Wife declares: “better is to marry than to burn [of love]” (52), and “it [love] has desire to consume every thing” (373-5). Arcita pleads with Mars, who was passionately in love with Venus, to help him: “. . . by that same hot fire / In which you once burned with desire” (2383-4). Absolon, deeply in love with Alison, even claims, “for your love I sweat” (3702), showing that burning love can not only increase body heat, but eventually cause sweating. On the other hand, when love fades or completely disappears, it is conceptualized as lack of heat. So we read of poor Absolon that “his hot love was cooled” (3754) after Alison had made a fool of him. The concept of warmth or fire is still creative today. Typically, when we start loving someone we *warm ourselves towards someone*, and when our feelings become strong we speak about *burning/ardent/fervent love* or about *hot-blooded lovers*, for example. Conversely, for the lack of love we use expressions like *their cold relationship, his cool wife, his frigid partner*, etc.

JEALOUSY is often closely connected with love, and similarly metaphorically conceptualized as FIRE. The Knight in his Tale describes jealous Palamon, the rival of Arcita, in the following way: “the fire of jealousy started up / within his breast” (1299-1300). Even today, it is still common to hear that somebody is *burning* or *consumed with jealousy*.

PAIN is also experienced as FIRE and frequently expressed in terms of *hell*, a place where eternal fire burns, according to Christian belief. Describing his life far away from his beloved Emily, Arcita says, “It’s now my fate eternally to dwell / Not in purgatory but in hell” (1225-6), and Palamon likewise grieves: “I have no words to tell / The ravages and torments of my hell” (2227-8). Even today it is common to say, for example, *I’ve been through hell in the last ten days*.

So far we have offered expressions of diverse emotional states in the *Canterbury Tales* which are experienced as fire and, in the case of rage and shame, visible as redness in the face and neck. However, the strong emotion of FEAR is also manifested in appearance, but as WHITENESS IN THE FACE, since it is bodily experienced in a completely different way than rage. When we are afraid, blood circulation slows down, and body temperature subsequently decreases. Coldness results in paleness. So it seems natural that, in the “Knight’s Tale,” the image of Fear, exposed in the temple of Mars, is described as “pale Dread” (1998).

According to frequency, the FIRE metaphor is clearly a major one within the structural metaphors. However, we find a considerable number of minor metaphors that appear in the *Canterbury Tales* as emotion-specific. Thus, LOVE is the only feeling conceptualized AS ILLNESS or DEATH. Like any illness, love causes pain. So, Duke Theseus, full of compassion for unhappy lovers Arcita and Palamon, admits: “I know love’s pain / And know very well how it can hurt a man” (1815-6). In the “General Prologue,” Chaucer depicts the Wife, an experienced middle-aged woman, who married five times, as one who “knew remedies of love” (475), and the Miller, in his Tale, says that young Absolon, having been humiliated by his adored Alison, “was healed of his malady” (3757). Similarly, Arcita, hopelessly in love with Emily, describes his state thus: “I’m as good as dead, there is no remedy” (1274). The perception of love in terms of sickness is also common today, since there is a whole range of conventional expressions, such as: *You drive me out of my mind, I’m sick to death of your love, Your love will kill me, You’ll be the death of me*, etc. However, lovesickness is currently rarely thought of as caused by love darts, which, directed from the eyes of his mistress, hurt the lover’s eyes and then his heart, causing serious illness, even death. For example, Arcita points out: “to slay me utterly, / Love has, with its fiery dart so burningly / Stuck into my true, troubled heart” (1563-5), and “But I was hurt just now through the eye / right to the heart and it will kill me” (1096-7) as well as “You slay me with your eyes, fair Emily” (1567). But, if we do not speak any more about love darts that pass through the eyes, the eyes are still important in love, so we can often hear something like this: *His eyes were filled with love, There was passion in his eyes, Her eyes welled with emotion*, etc.

Another love-specific metaphorical concept found in the *Canterbury Tales* is LOVE IS WAR. It is clearly noticeable in Arcita’s expression, “my sweet foe” (2780), addressed to Emily. The Wife, in her “Prologue,” says that her young husband “could win” her love (512), and in her Tale she wisely concludes: “A man shall win us best with flattery” (932). Love is nowadays still experienced in terms of war, as evident from the following expressions: *He won my heart, She gained his affections, I lost my heart, They were captured by love*, etc.

LOVE IS CLOSENESS, too. Emily declares, “I do not want the company of man” (2311), actually speaking about sexual intercourse, as seen from the context. Absolon, in the “Miller’s Tale,” states that “The one nigh and sly / Always makes the distant dear one loathed” (3392-3), and the Miller explains: “Because he was far out of her sight / Nigh Nicholas stood in his light” (3395-6). The word *light* actually stands here for happiness.

The emotion of love appears to be closely connected with the emotion of LUST, which is metaphorically structured in the *Canterbury Tales* as HUNGER. Thus, the Wife, talking about her love affairs, points out: “But [I] always followed my appetite” (623). She is not ashamed to admit: “For profit I would endure all his lust, / And feign an appetite; / In bacon, though, I never took delight” (416-8). *Bacon* obviously denotes old men, and the whole idiom expresses the Wife’s disgust, not lust. Nevertheless, it suggests another concept: THE OBJECT OF LUST IS FOOD. Lust, just as love and anger, is often visible in someone’s eyes and mouth, and when Absolon says, “My mouth has itched the whole day long” (3682), we understand from the context that he actually anticipates kissing, at least. Cute Alison, on the other hand, “had a lickerish eye” (3244).

Nowadays, sexual urge is similarly conceptualized in terms of hunger (or thirst), for example: *She is love-starved, I hunger for your touch, You have a remarkable sexual appetite*, and the object of lust is still conceived of in terms of food, for example: *She's quite a dish, What a piece of meat! Hi, sugar!* etc. Nevertheless, we cannot hear anyone saying, "But I had always a coltish tooth" (602), or "With empty hand you cannot lure a hawk" (415), as the Wife does, although the underlying concept LUST IS ANIMAL is current today. Neither lust nor sexual urge is commonly identified today with Venus, as we find in the Wife's words: "Venus gave me my lust" (611) and "And after wine, I would think on Venus" (464).

For JEALOUSY we find in the *Canterbury Tales* only a metaphor that refers to the facial expression of jealous Arcita. Chaucer says that his eyes are: "bright-citron" (2167), associating the yellow-greenish colour of lemon with bitterness. Even today, the most common metaphorical expression for a jealous person is *green with envy* or *green-eyed monster*. Nevertheless, metaphors of revenge or retribution, caused by jealousy, anger and pain, are quite frequent. Thus the Wife, in revenge for her husband's infidelity, "made him a cross of the same wood" (484), "made him fry in his own grease" (487), and was "his purgatory on earth" (489), etc. Similar expressions are still in usage, for example, *We all have our crosses to bear, His first marriage was purgatory*, etc.

## 4.3 Orientational Metaphors

The concept GOOD IS UP, which is based on our physical upright posture in space, shows the up-orientation to general well-being and is coherent with many other concepts, but considering the topic, we shall deal with only a few of them, the first being: HAPPY IS UP. Lakoff and Johnson clearly explain that "Drooping posture typically goes along with sadness and depression, erect posture with a positive emotional state" (1980, 15). They give numerous examples, such as *I'm feeling up, My spirits rose, I fell into a depression, It gives me a lift, That sinking feeling..., He was floating on air*, etc. In the "Second Nun's Tale," Chaucer says, about St. Cecily, who converted her husband and his brother to Christianity, that "the maiden has brought these men to bliss above" (281). When Arcita has to leave Emily, his spirits are "so low" (1369) because she does not care if he "sinks or swims" (2397), and when Palamon is allowed to fight for Emily against Arcita, his happiness is expressed literally in: "Who looks as *light* now as Palamon?" (1870). Obviously, the notion *light*, which literary means "not heavy, light in weight" and entails moving up, lifting, stands for *happy*. Similarly, in the "Nun's Tale," Pope Urban baptizes Tiburce "with glad and light heart" (351).

Happiness and positive emotions in general are not understood only as upright-directed, but in terms of increased energy, which is shown through motion and other activities. Thus, the Wife's art of love is expressed as "the old dance" (476), where dance is nothing but an output of positive energy.

As has been said, the concept that good is up is coherent with many other concepts, one of them being HAVING FORCE IS UP / BEING SUBJECT TO FORCE IS DOWN, currently expressed, for example, by the idioms: *I have control over her, He is in a superior position, He is under my control, He is my social inferior*, etc. In the *Canterbury Tales*, the main emotional force is love. Love is a lord who rules the hearts of his subjects. Therefore, it is true that LOVE IS UP / LOVERS ARE DOWN, especially where the knights are concerned. So Duke Theseus describes both Arcita and Palamon in the following way: "Thus has their lord, the god of love, paid / Their fee and wage for serving him! / Yet they think themselves very wise / In serving love, whatever may befall" (1802-5). He understands them well, admitting: "In my time I was love's servant, too" (1814).



## 5. Analysis

The examples from the *Canterbury Tales* have shown that a whole range of emotions, such as anger, rage, love, sorrow, pain, jealousy, blame, happiness, pity, shame, fear, lust and longing, was conceived of in mediaeval times by means of metaphorical concepts. When we compare them with modern ones, we find out that almost all of them are still active. In other words, English speakers have continuously thought about emotions in more or less the same way through a period of five hundred years.

Of course, this refers only to the emotional metaphorical concepts, not to the source notions used in their expression, which have considerably altered over such a long period, mostly because of social and cultural development. For example, *love arrows* are not thought of as a cause of lovesickness any more, although the concept LOVE IS ILLNESS / LOVE IS DEATH is still in operation. Likewise, *hawk luring* or *coltish tooth* are not used today to express sexual urge, despite the fact that the concepts LUST IS HUNGER and LUST IS ANIMAL are still active. We also cannot hear that someone is a *servant of love*, or *servng love*, except for in poetry. Especially unconventional at present are the expressions with personified classical gods and goddesses, since no one understands love, lust, happiness, anger or unhappiness as acts of Venus, Cupid, Fortuna, Mars or Saturn. All the terms used belong to the domains of mediaeval feudal tradition, including skills and sports (archery, falconry, horsemanship), art (court poetry), and mediaeval pseudoscience (astrology). Since they do not make up part of modern people's common experience, they were abandoned long ago by English speakers and replaced with new source notions, which were closer and clearer in their mind.

However, what strikes one more than the change of source notions is the fact that emotional metaphorical concepts were subject, in mediaeval times, to social and cultural differentiation, while today they are not. So at least it seems, judging from the metaphors uttered by Chaucer's characters. For example, the concepts of lust in the *Canterbury Tales* are evident only in the language of the Wife, Absolon and Alison, who all happen to be members of the middle social class, but not in the language of Arcita, Palamon, Theseus and Emily, who belong to the upper class. Jealousy is verbally expressed only by the Wife, who extensively elaborates on the revenge she took on her unfaithful husbands. By contrast, jealous Arcita remains silent. Anger is also not directly expressed by any noble figure in the *Canterbury Tales*, but when it eventually arises, it is rapidly suppressed, and soon "goes away", as in the case of good King Theseus. Further on, the linguistic expression of shame appears only when the Wife mocks her young husband, and that of blame when Chaucer pardons readers for the vulgar Miller's Tale that follows. However, there is no place for blame or shame in a noble heart. The Nun and the characters in her tale, St. Cecily, Maximus and Pope Urban, express only feelings of mercy and pity for "brothers", as well as of happiness, when these become Christians. Naturally, there are no traces of anger, jealousy or lust in them, as completely incompatible with their Christian beliefs and profession.

So, from metaphorical expressions used by the characters in the *Canterbury Tales*, one can conclude that the emotional experience of mediaeval people was heavily restricted according to their social status and occupation.<sup>1</sup> Thus, negative emotions, such as blame, shame, lust, rage, and longing for revenge, were typical of members of the middle class, while positive emotions, like mercy and pity, were characteristic of those of the upper class and representatives of the Church. Even the emotion of love, expressed metaphorically by all the characters in the *Canterbury Tales*, appears at different levels. While the Nun and her heroes convey Christian love, the others express 'earthly' love, either sensual (the Wife, Absolon, Alison) or platonic (Arcita, Palamon, Theseus).

<sup>1</sup> Admittedly, metaphors represent only one feature of their language, while others, including emotional expressions with literal meaning, are not discussed here. Nevertheless, in the light of Lakoff and Johnson's theory, metaphors can clearly indicate how people experience certain ideas.

Indeed, from the modern point of view such distribution of emotions seems completely unnatural. Current scientific research argues that emotions are part of spontaneous, innate, conscious and *universal* experience, meaning that all humans are capable of them. This refers to all emotions, positive and negative, pleasant and unpleasant. Accordingly, we may reasonably assume that the mediaeval aristocracy or clergy also experienced 'low' feelings, like the other people, but did not want to show them overtly.<sup>2</sup>

Naturally, the question is why. Did they willingly decide to hide their negative emotions, or were they forced to by social constraints? Concerning the spontaneous nature of emotions, we would rather say that such behaviour was caused by the then dominant social and cultural norms, which imposed a certain set of values, according to which some emotions were perceived as desirable and some as unacceptable. Members of the upper class seem to be more subjected to the prescribed social norms, and they were expected to experience only 'elevated' or 'noble' feelings, at least in most contexts. On the other hand, the middle-class participants seem to be less subjected to social and cultural sets of norms, and therefore less impeded in emotional experience, as reflected in their metaphorical expressions of both 'high' and 'low' emotions.

Interestingly, against all established prejudices according to which women are tenderer, more refined, more vulnerable, and generally more sensitive, while men are more restrained in emotional expression, it seems that in mediaeval times there was no differentiation on the basis of gender, since female and male members of the same social class similarly expressed their 'rough' or 'elevated' emotions: for example, the Miller and the Wife, on the one hand, and Arcita and Emily, on the other. The same is true for male members of the aristocracy and female members of the Church, as for example Theseus and the Nun, who, both privileged, shared only cultivated and refined feelings.

Understandably, the imposed social and cultural norms did not only determine what emotions might have been expressed, but also shaped how these emotions had to be thought of. This is why some metaphorical concepts were accepted and used only by members of specific social classes, and not by others. Since metaphorical concepts represent the underlying foundation of metaphorical expressions, it is logical to conclude that the concepts were equally subjected to social differentiation as the expressions. However, this does not refer to gender differentiation.

By means of numerous examples in the previous section, we have shown that all mediaeval metaphorical concepts have remained active to the present day – but, we claim, with one essential difference: that nowadays they are not partly, but highly, conventional. It could be said that today they represent a common way of thinking for most English speakers, no matter whether used in conceiving of negative or positive emotions. Apparently, the clear-cut boundaries between social communities have faded, and now all English speakers belong to one large social and, consequently, emotional community, in which there are no restrictions on how people think or express emotions. If there are differences, these are individual and not social. Such change is probably due to the fact that the once dominant social stratum, which was most subject to imposed social and cultural restrictions, has become marginal, and another, which was once less bound by social and cultural norms, has become prominent as economically more powerful. Although this growing middle class, (in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries often called bourgeois), has tended to acquire position once held by the upper class, it has preserved its former authenticity and independence in the conceptualization and expression of emotions. And with this, the imposed cultivation and education of emotions has fallen into oblivion.

<sup>2</sup> However, some emotions cannot be denied, even if one seeks to hide them. Modern science can pretty well detect the presence of various emotions, and even measure them by means of specific instruments and tools. In his time Chaucer detected them from facial expression, complexion or eyes by mere observation. Thus he revealed Arcita's jealousy in his "bright-citron eyes" and the shame of the Wife's husband in his "red and hot" face.

## 6. Conclusion

The comparison of mediaeval with modern metaphorical concepts has shown that the conception of emotions has remained permanent over a long period of approximately five hundred years, but the level of metaphorical conventionality has changed significantly. While the mediaeval metaphorical concepts of mostly negative emotions were conventional for the middle- or lower-class participants, those of mostly positive emotions were conventional only for high-class or Church members. Thus, specific social communities were, at the same time, specific emotional communities. Such conceiving of emotions was shaped by contemporary social and cultural norms, which imposed a certain set of values, according to which some emotions were perceived as desirable and some as unacceptable. Today, in spite of the fact that some mediaeval source notions have been replaced by new ones, all inherited metaphorical emotional concepts seem to be equally conventional for all members of society, regardless of one's social status or profession. The existing differences in emotional conceptualization are purely individual and not social.

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