

CULTURAL COGNITION AND CULTURAL METAPHORS: A STUDY ON THE PRACTICES OF FUNERAL AND MARRIAGE RITES IN THE VIETNAMESE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT: People engage in rituals during funerals and marriages, expressing not only through concrete actions but also through language. This paper delves into the cultural conceptualization of DEATH and MARRIAGE by exploring the cultural cognition and metaphors of the Vietnamese Catholic community, highlighting peculiarities compared to both the broader Vietnamese community adhering to traditional customs and a group following different religious beliefs. It is challenging for individuals to conceptualize abstract notions of DEATH and MARRIAGE universally. By employing quantitative and qualitative methods, along with Cultural Linguistics research techniques, this study identifies the fundamental characteristics of cultural cognition among Vietnamese Catholics. These are predominantly conveyed through stories from the Bible, doctrinal lectures, and the practices of the Vietnamese community in a given locality. Typical cultural metaphors emerge through 64 expressions commonly observed in Vietnamese Catholic funerals and weddings. Generalizing shared source domain concepts such as JOURNEY, TRANSFORMATION, and RETURNING, alongside specific source domain concepts of DEATH and MARRIAGE, reveals a correlation between these two ideas within Catholicism. This understanding enables members of other cultural communities to better comprehend the mindset of Vietnamese Catholics.

KEY WORDS: cultural cognition, cultural metaphor, cultural linguistics, ritual, Vietnam Catholic Community.

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1. Introduction

The concept of “cognition” has been extensively studied by scholars across various disciplines, focusing on the human mind and mental activity. As a natural consequence of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of cognition, it becomes essential to revisit and expand the conceptual scope of cognition. One such expansion includes the interaction of culture with language. In this view, culture significantly shapes and influences cognitive processes.

Metaphors exist not only in literary language but also in thought. Each person's expressions in a linguistic community contain 'images' through which different cultures may perceive things differently. This is crucial because both culture and language contribute to the formation of meaning. In a community, individuals may think differently about abstract issues and approach each other's cultural values, creating a 'network of meaning' through language practice. This process leads to the development of cultural metaphors.

Regarding religion, Sharifian (2011, 2017a) noted that the spiritual system of any religion “represents a worldview or specific conceptual systems about the world, life, death, morality, creation, afterlife, fate, etc.” This paper examines the cultural cognition of the Vietnamese Catholic community to understand how ideas are formed through different behaviors and thoughts via cultural cognition, thereby giving rise to typical cultural metaphor patterns relevant to rituals.

Funerals and marriages are complex rites that individuals typically experience at least once in their lives. Within the Vietnamese Catholic community, the use of language during these ceremonies manifests the spirit of communion and prayer among the community of God's people for the central figure in the ceremony. It also signifies the obligations and shared responsibilities of family members. These rituals not only reveal the worldview of the participants but also portray the

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behavioral culture of the Vietnamese ethnic community. The community's conceptualization of DEATH or MARRIAGE involves identification, agreement, and differences mixed with opposition.

This article aims to address the following questions: 1/What constitutes the cultural cognition of the Vietnamese Catholic community during the practice of funeral and marriage rites?; 2/How do Vietnamese Catholics conceptualize DEATH and MARRIAGE within their community?; 3/Through an exploration of the cultural metaphors associated with DEATH and MARRIAGE, is there a discernible correlation between these concepts in the minds of individual members of the Vietnamese Catholic community?

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Cultural cognition

Cultural cognition centers on the exploration of culturally specific constructs within a discourse community. Various perspectives on cultural cognition exist, including:

Hutchins (1994) views cultural cognition as a form of distributed cognition that encompasses factors external to the human organism, such as technology and the environment. Consequently, under the influence of circumstances and over time, each member of a speech community often does not equally share their views with others.

Viewed from a technical perspective, Goldstein (1999) argues that cultural cognition results from the interactions between parts of a system (the members of a group) and is more than the sum of its parts (more than the sum of the cognitive systems of the individual members).

Frank (2015) stated that cultural cognition is *a form of cognition that [...] is not represented simply as some sort of abstract disembodied 'between the ears' entity*. More specifically, cultural cognition is an “enactive cognition” (cf. Stewart, Gapenne, & Di Paolo, 2011), arising from the social and linguistic interactions of individuals over time and space (Cowley & Vallée-Tourangeau, 2013).

Therefore, cultural cognition results from the interaction among members of speech communities across space and time, encompassing the emergence of cultural knowledge and interactions among individuals. Cultural conceptualizations and the ability to use language are at the core of cultural cognition. It is evident that the concepts and evaluations of past members can leave a lasting impression on language practice in specific environments and situations later on. Indeed, as Sharifian (2017a, 2017b) observes, language serves as the primary mechanism through which a speech community can store and transmit cultural awareness and reinterpretations to one another, functioning as a “collective memory bank” (wa Thiong'o, 1986) for cultural conceptualizations.

Like all emerging systems, cultural cognition is dynamic. People frequently engage in negotiation and renegotiation (the process of exchange - acculturation) across generations within that cultural community. Additionally, contact between members of that cultural community and others occurs through language. It is evident that cultural cognition is a heterogeneously distributed form of thinking among members of a cultural group rather than within a particular individual. Figure 1 below depicts the cultural cognition process for each individual belonging to a specific cultural group:

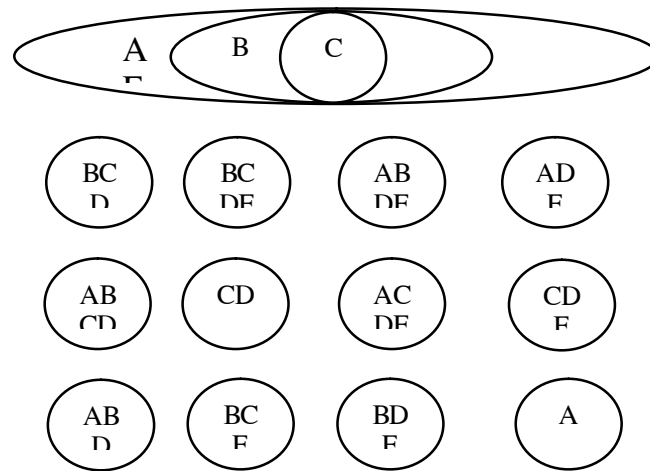


Figure 1. Distributed, emergent cultural cognition
[Source: Sharifian, 2011]

Thus, from the perspective of Cultural Linguistics, cultural cognition is a form of socially distributed cognition that transcends the individual level. It explores the interaction between people and their environment, focusing on the existence of specific communities and their social context. Regarded as a “complex adaptive system” (Waldrop, 1992) and an “open system” (Sharifian, 2011), cultural cognition plays a common role in development, dissemination and reinforcement of thought processes within each member of a social community to varying degrees. Figure 2 provides a synopsis of theoretical and analytical frameworks in Cultural Linguistics. In this article, the framework of cultural cognition is used to view cultural metaphors as one of the components for researching our database.

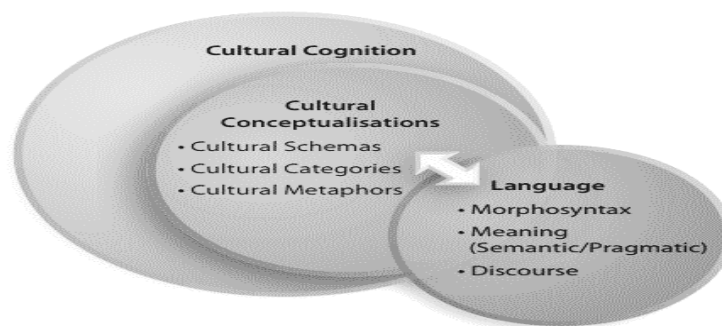


Figure 2. Synopsis of the theoretical and analytical frameworks of Cultural Linguistics
[Source: Sharifian, 2017a]

Although each individual in the community of God-believers in Vietnam shares the same faith and worships a powerful Supreme Being, they may have distinct perceptions regarding the practices of funeral and marriage rites. Catholicism, along with its concepts of death and marriage, varies through prayer and catechesis.

2.2. Cultural metaphors

People often rely on emerging ideas to structure information about real-world events. They condense myriad phenomena observed and imagined into a unified system, facilitating the storage of acquired knowledge. At this juncture, individuals comprehend aspects of the world by mapping the abstract to the familiar. Mapping, however, involves the automatic (unconscious) generation of metaphorical expressions, maintaining the linguistic system as a result of human mental associations.

These outcomes led to the development of Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*. They adopted a universally applicable stance by identifying the roots of metaphor through cross-domain mapping in human neurophysiological structures. The mechanism of metaphor involves two domains: SOURCE and TARGET, with the target domain representing the conceptual understanding derived from the source domain. The metaphor is concretized by the formula: TARGET IS SOURCE. Thus, to comprehend a metaphorical linguistic expression, one must identify an abstract concept in the target domain and employ another concrete, easily understandable, and tangible concept in the source domain to represent the metaphorical expression.

Cultural metaphors, originating from the theory of conceptual metaphors, involve a form of conceptualization between two domains. This concept represents the amalgamation of all cultures, shaped in individuals' cognition through the accumulation of background knowledge specific to that culture. Consequently, when individuals encounter a metaphorical linguistic expression, they can discern the cultural values concealed within these metaphorical models. Specifically, if linguistic expressions featuring these metaphors are used across various linguistic communities globally, we can assess these metaphors across multiple languages. They not only represent universal metaphorical expressions but also appear to be heavily influenced by the cultural and linguistic factors of the ethnic community in each country. Therefore, one would anticipate a considerable degree of variation cultural metaphors. In summary, the exploration of cultural metaphors has the potential to identify conceptual metaphors that are either universally embraced or unique to specific discourse communities.

In *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation*, Kövecses (2005) significantly integrates the cultural element by making two important "modifications" in his theory. He emphasizes that the source domain is often applied to a range of target domains of a cultural community.

a) These are complex metaphors where individuals actually engage their thoughts within the specific cultural context.

b) Kövecses introduces the concept of "main meaning focus," emphasizing how metaphors are understood within speech communities.

The theory of cognitive metaphor, expanded to include cultural metaphor, enriches the study of the relationship between metaphor and culture. Kövecses (2002) establishes connections between conceptual metaphors and language activities, human conceptual systems, and cultural practices, which contribute to the creation of new linguistic expressions and the organization of human thought.

A cultural metaphor represents a concept rooted in cultural traditions such as folk medicine, worldview, and spiritual (religious) belief systems. Taking the Catholic marriage and funeral rites of the Vietnamese community as an example, we explore and identify fundamental cultural conceptualizations through cultural cognition and cultural metaphors within Vietnamese Catholic practice. This exploration helps to formulate typical metaphors related to DEATH and MARRIAGE. The spiritual worldview of Vietnamese Catholics aligns with the faith and foundational awareness of the Vietnamese people.

3. Data source and research methodology

3.1. Background

As Catholicism progressed into the twentieth century within Eastern countries, it maintained its distinct cultural and religious characteristics. Unlike Buddhism or Taoism in Asia, Catholicism does not accommodate the concept of the "three teachings harmoniously coexisting" or the acceptance of multiple religious beliefs. This caused a sharp conflict between monotheistic religious and polytheistic beliefs of Vietnamese people through ritual practice¹. Despite long-standing prohibitions against ancestor worship, this custom persists in the spiritual life of Vietnamese Catholics to this day.

Before the Second Vatican Council was held², Vietnamese Catholic believers are not allowed to practice according to traditional ritual customs. In extremely difficult and challenging conditions, building a new ideologies to integrate with Vietnamese culture is necessarily established as soon as possible³. Following the Second Vatican Council, Vietnamese Catholics adopted a dual practice of rites: ceremonies infused with Catholic principles alongside customs rooted in national traditions. This dual practice reflects varying attitudes and understandings within Catholic communities regarding ritual life. Generally, funeral and marriage rites serve as occasions for relatives to unite, offering mutual support and comfort, while also demonstrating a strong sense of community.

Through the interaction of these two cultures, Vietnamese believers have embraced Western Catholic cultural values while concurrently integrating their indigenous cultural values, aiming for cultural harmony and cohesion.

3.2. Data collection

A total of 64 metaphorical expressions were retrieved in the corpus. They were gathered according to survey Vietnamese Catholic community at some churches in Ho Chi Minh City. In addition, four documents cited below are used to practicing rites. in two stages: in church (celebration) and outside the church.

- Marriage Rites [Nghị thức cử hành hôn nhân] (2009) of the Bishops' Conference of Vietnam.
- Faith and Hope [Niềm tin và hy vọng] (2011) by John the Baptist Nguyen Van Hieu.
- Funeral Rites (2014) [Nghị thức an táng] of the Vietnamese Bishops' Conference.
- Catholic Prayer and Communion [Nghị thức và Gia lễ Công giáo] (2020) by John Peter Vo Ta Khanh.

3.3. Methodology

To explore the foundational cultural conceptualizations within the Vietnamese Catholic community's funeral and marriage rites, the authors utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection. The corpus was gathered and refined through the authors' participation in five funeral and marriage ceremonies within the Vietnamese Catholic community in Ho Chi Minh City.

This study also integrates research methodologies from Cultural Linguistics, as proposed by Sharifian (2011). These methodologies encompass corpus-based analysis, conceptual analysis of narrative accounts, conceptual-associative analysis, and (meta)discourse analysis.

Furthermore, to identify metaphorical expressions related to DEATH and MARRIAGE embedded in language practices during funeral and marriage rites of the Vietnamese Catholic community, the

authors employed the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007).

The MIP is as follows:

1. Read the entire text–discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text–discourse
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.

(b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be

- More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.
- Related to bodily action.
- More precise (as opposed to vague)
- Historically older.

Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.

(c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current–contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. The cultural cognition of Vietnamese Catholic community in funeral and marriage rites

This study aims to uncover the cognitive characteristics of the Vietnamese Catholic community regarding their conceptualizations of DEATH and MARRIAGE. These group-level cognitive features emerge from interactions over time and space within the community. Indeed, the Catholic community in Vietnam may develop cognitive patterns that are similar or partially similar. Figure 3 provides a summary of their cultural cognition.



Figure 3. The cultural cognition of Vietnamese Catholic community

[Source: The authors]

4.1.1. *The cultural cognition of the Vietnamese about Catholic rites*

The celebration of a Catholic rite at a church is highly solemn and constitutes a Mass. These rites, referred to as 'phụng vụ' ('liturgical'), adhere to normative and universal standards. Priests must follow prescribed laws during these celebrations, basing their liturgical rites on Catholic documents, decrees, missals, ritual books, and prayers. Consequently, the celebration of the rite remains consistent across all parishes, with no variation between parish communities.

In contrast, the celebration of Catholic rites outside the church by parishioners or priests in Vietnam is notably diverse. There are no specific regulations as stringent as those governing Mass. While families may follow suggested content from available prayer books, representatives have the freedom to personally add, omit, or replace prayers and hymns at their discretion. Local cultural elements are often incorporated to align with regional circumstances and customs. For instance, individuals may choose to recite basic prayers or sing hymns suited to mental comfort. The laity enjoy the autonomy to make personal choices without compulsion from bishops or diocesan priests. Particularly during challenging situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, many Catholic families advocate simplifying rituals to ensure conciseness while retaining solemnity and meaning.

The practice of the Vietnamese Catholic community performing rites outside the church may appear similar to that of Vietnamese non-believers. However, specific Catholic rites must be adhered to by the celebrant in accordance with the general text specified in the book.

4.1.2. *The cultural cognition of Vietnamese Catholic community of death*

In general, the Oriental, and particularly the Vietnamese, rarely use the word "death" when referring to the death of a loved one. Vietnamese people often use some polite ways of saying it such as: "*qua đời*", "*chia tay cõi trần*", "*đã khuất*", "*lìa đời*", "*lìa trần*"... (*pass away*), because they consider "*death as birth, death as existence*" (*sự tử như sự sinh, sự vong như sự tồn*). Vietnamese Catholic community has also similar concepts when using words to describe death, such as:

- *Qua đời* (Pass away): the dead person has (passed) this (temporary) life to come to a new life.
- *Mất* (Loss): relative, loss in this life but still exists in the next life.
- *Sinh thì* (Birth time): time to rise, time to die (the time when the soul leaves the body)⁴.

In contrast to the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism, Catholicism does not envision the soul being reborn in another form. Followers of Christ perceive death in two categories: "*chết lành*" (*a good death*) and "*chết dữ*" (*a bad death*). A bad death is characterized by ingratitude towards God, rebellion against Christ, and a failure to seek forgiveness, potentially resulting in separation from God in Hell. On the other hand, those who experience a "good death" receive God's love by leading a sincere religious life, adhering to Christian principles, and knowing how to repent and do penance. Consequently, Catholic believers often confront death with faith and hope.

4.1.3. *The cultural cognition of Vietnamese Catholic community of marriage*

Marriage holds immense importance in Vietnamese culture. Before officially tying the knot, couples undergo several months of preparation, including studying marriage catechism, announcing the marriage, and practicing the marriage rites. Once officially married, the relationship between a man and a woman transforms into a husband and wife relationship, marking the establishment of a family. This transition signifies maturity in terms of awareness, psychophysiology, and social responsibility. Therefore, the couple commits to unity, complete dedication, faithful living, and the creation of a fulfilling life together, often involving starting a family with children.

The bond between a Catholic couple is unique, strengthened, and consecrated through the sacrament of Matrimony to fulfill their divine office and embrace their duties and responsibilities. However, in the journey of marriage and family life, encountering obstacles and challenges, especially in the case of a heterosexual marriage (between a Catholic person and a non-believer), is inevitable. Differences in faith may lead to difficulties in understanding aspects of faith, duties, and responsibilities.

In essence, the purpose of Catholic marriage is for the husband and wife to live and love each other throughout their lives. The fulfillment of this love is realized when the couple, as a gift from God, brings children into the world and educates them to be humane. This convergence reflects the meeting point for marriages between Vietnamese Catholics and those adhering to traditional customs, highlighting that Catholic marriage is deeply human and a natural aspiration for individuals embarking on married life.

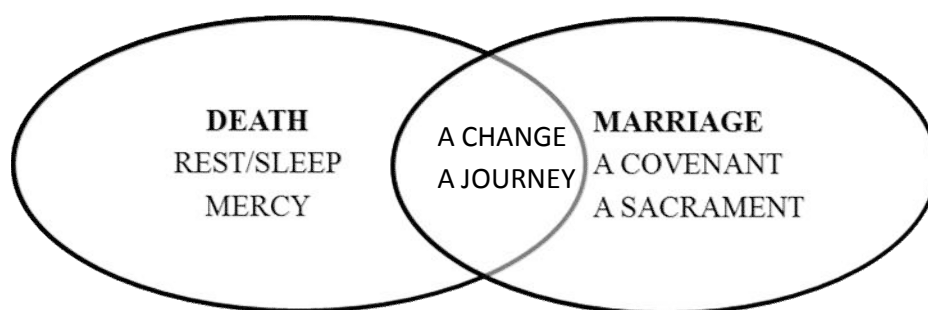
4.2. Cultural metaphors DEATH and MARRIAGE in the funeral and marriage rite of Vietnamese Catholic community

4.2.1. Cultural metaphors DEATH in the funeral rites of Vietnamese Catholic community

While sharing the same faith and receiving instruction in the same system of canon law and doctrine, each Vietnamese Catholic individual perceives and conceptualizes DEATH and MARRIAGE uniquely. Thus, cultural metaphors not only vary between different global cultures but also within cultures, particularly among members of the Vietnamese Catholic community. Diverse interpretations can arise due to differences in social context, region, ethnicity, and personal perspective. However, despite this diversity, the Vietnamese Catholic community maintains common perspectives on death and marriage that are considered specific to these concepts. Referred to as universal metaphors, these shared perspectives may stem from fundamental doctrinal beliefs and attitudes that manifest in human experiences. Therefore, some of the cultural metaphors outlined below are likely to be nearly universal or specific to the Vietnamese Catholic community. The results are depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4. The cultural metaphors of Vietnamese Catholic community

Source: Authors



DEATH IS REST/SLEEP

Experiencing numerous vicissitudes, with many ups and downs in life, death represents the moment to "rest in peace," bringing an end to all physical and mental activities. Vietnamese Catholics articulate this concept through expressions such as "rest," "rest in peace," or "peaceful sleep" in their language. Therefore, our first cultural metaphor of DEATH is defined with the source conceptual domain representing the human state of REST, illustrated in Table 1 alongside typical expressions (1) – (8) as follows:

Table 1. Conceptualizations of DEATH IS REST/SLEEP

The source domain of REST/SLEEP		The target domain of DEATH
Ngưng công việc	→	Ngưng sống
Stop working		Stop living
Nghỉ ngơi hoàn toàn	→	Nằm yên, bất động
Complete rest		Lie, motionless
Giấc ngủ vật lý	→	Giấc ngủ vĩnh hằng
Physical sleep		Eternal sleep
Chờ đợi sức khỏe và tinh thần được tái	→	Chờ đợi thân xác được tái tạo

tạo Waiting for health and spirit to be regenerated Có trạng thái tốt nhất Have the best status	→	Waiting for the body to be regenerated Trong sạch tội lỗi Clean from sin
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(1) Xin cho linh hồn này [...] được an nghỉ trong ánh sáng hạnh phúc muôn đời.

May this soul [...] be rested in the light of eternal happiness.

(2) Xin Chúa thương cho tôi tớ Chúa được nghỉ yên trong ngôi mộ này.

May God have mercy on your servant to rest in this tomb.

(3) Chúng con cậy vì Danh Chúa nhân từ, cho linh hồn T. được lên chốn nghỉ ngơi.

We hope that in the name of merciful God, let T.'s soul rest in peace.

(4) Lạy Chúa, xin cho linh hồn T. được nghỉ yên muôn đời.

My Lord, may T.'s soul be rest in eternal peace.

(5) Nguyện xin Thiên Chúa ban cho ông/bà/anh/chị/em được yên giấc ngàn thu.

May God grant him/her eternal rest.

(6) Anh chị em thân mến, người anh (chị) em chúng ta đã yên nghỉ trong bình an của Đức Kitô.

Dear brothers and sisters, our T. have been rested in the peace of Christ.

(7) [...] thân xác tôi tớ Chúa là ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. (...) được yên nghỉ trong đó chờ ngày Chúa cho sống lại

[...] the body of God's servant Mr./Mrs. T. (...) was rested in it in order to wait for the day when the Lord will raise him/her up.

(8) Trong đồng cỏ xanh tươi, Chúa cho tôi nằm nghỉ.

In the green pastures, the Lord let me rest.

Human death is likened to a state of falling asleep, bringing stillness and offering relaxation to the soul and mind after a life of hard work. Bultinck (2009) notes that "death implies a shift from presence to absence. This is the most concrete, material experiential basis for the expressions that belong here." Therefore, another metaphor that exists is DEATH IS SLEEP. This linkage between death and sleep is deeply rooted in human experience. The conceptualization of SLEEP complements the concept of REST meaningfully.

Unlike some Vietnamese communities that perceive the death of a loved one as a great loss, Vietnamese Christians often accept death with great peace of mind. In this metaphorical expression, the source domain of REST also indicates that the place for the deceased is a "place of rest." This place is understood in two stages: the temporary resting period symbolized by "the tomb," the earthly burial place, and the eternal "resting" period, a place filled with light and eternal happiness. It is envisioned as a "green grassland," bathed in light, and characterized by "the peace of Christ." Vietnamese Christians anticipate transitioning to this otherworldly realm where they will experience the eternal "light of happiness" of Christ.

DEATH IS MERCY

Death often evokes profound emotions among relatives and friends, such as deep grief. This commonly leads to the conceptualization of LOSS, a sentiment prevalent in many cultural communities worldwide. However, within the Vietnamese Catholic community, expressions such as "thương xót" (mercy) are frequently used in condolences and prayers. "Mercy" signifies the ability to empathize with those who suffer, a concept deeply ingrained in Catholicism and expressed in various forms. It is also considered one of God's defining attributes, exemplified by His forgiveness and compassion towards humanity's sins. As such, for Vietnamese Catholics, invoking MERCY is an effective way to alleviate the sorrow of the bereaved and seek solace in divine compassion.

This metaphorical expression is considered through the following linguistic expressions (9) – (15):

(9) Trong niềm tin vào Đức Kitô Phục Sinh, Giáo khu 1 vô cùng thương tiếc báo tin.

In faith in the Risen Christ, Diocese 1, who with great mournful, informs.

(10) Dear brothers and sisters, we are mourning our loved one who had just been called by the Lord, so we want to put this mourning scarf on the head to show our love, regret and gratitude.

Anh chị em thân mến, chúng ta đang thương tiếc người thân của chúng ta vừa được Chúa gọi về, vì thế chúng ta muốn chít lên đầu chiếc khăn tang này để tỏ lòng thương mến, nhớ tiếc và biết ơn.

(11) Nguyên xin Chúa thương/mở lòng nhân từ đón nhận linh hồn T. (mới qua đời), sớm hưởng nhan Thánh Chúa/được vào nước Chúa. Amen.

May God have mercy/open mercy to receive T.'s soul (who recently passed away), soon enjoy the face of God/enter the kingdom of God. Amen.

(12) Vì cuộc khổ nạn đau thương của Chúa Giêsu Kitô, xin Cha thương xót linh hồn T.

Because of the painful passion of Jesus Christ, please have mercy on the soul of T.

(13) Hiệp lời cầu nguyện cho linh hồn T. Nguyên xin Chúa thương xót linh Hồn T. và an ủi những người thân trong gia đình.

Join in prayer for T.'s soul. May God have mercy on T.'s soul and comfort his family members.

(14) Nguyên xin Lòng Chúa Thương Xót ban thưởng hạnh phúc Nước Trời cho Linh hồn T.

May God's Mercy reward Heaven to the soul of T.

(15) Xin Chúa thương xót linh hồn T. và cho ánh sáng ngàn thu chiếu soi trên linh hồn T.

May God have mercy on T.'s soul and let the eternal light shine on T.'s soul.

Table 2. Conceptualisations of DEAD IS MERCY

The source domain of MERCY		The target domain of DEATH
Tiếc thương, đồng cảm	→	Con người vừa qua đời
Pity, sympathy		Human just passed away
Trân trọng	→	Niềm hi vọng được sống muôn đời
Best regards		The hope of eternal life
Biết ơn	→	Sự đồng hành của Thiên Chúa
Grateful		God's Companion

4.2.2. Cultural metaphors MARRIAGE in the marriage rites of Vietnamese Catholic community

MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT

Marriage is often seen as a contractual agreement between newlyweds, where worldly values like physical and material aspects may come into play. However, within Catholicism, marriage is viewed through a lens of humanity and morality, conceptualized as a covenant ('giao ước'). In the Bible, a covenant signifies the sacred relationship between God and the Jewish people, and between Jesus Christ and His Church. It transcends mere legality, emphasizing choice and commitment. Vietnamese Catholic believers similarly understand the marriage covenant as a 'love rope' that binds individuals together, forming a unique family.

The conceptualization of A COVENANT in Catholic marriage emerges when both families engage in mutual respect for each other's perspectives. Both parties review and agree upon the terms, proceeding with sincere commitments, often sealed publicly with gestures such as shaking hands or signing documents witnessed by others. Furthermore, a sub-metaphor that clarifies this cultural concept is MARRIAGE IS A LEGAL COVENANT.

By examining common prayers among Vietnamese believers, we can delineate the characteristics of the conceptual domain underlying A COVENANT for Vietnamese Catholic believers, as shown in Table 3 below. These mappings correspond to the following statements:

(16) [...] Xin Chúa dùng sợi dây tình yêu mà liên kết các tôi tớ Chúa sắp được nên một với nhau nhờ giao ước hôn nhân.

[...] May the Lord use the bond of love to unite your servants who are about to be made one by the covenant of marriage.

(17) Vậy, bởi vì các con đã quyết định thiết lập một giao ước hôn nhân.

So, since you have decided to establish a covenant of marriage.

(18) Xin Chúa ban phúc lành cho giao ước của hai con.

May God bless your covenant.

(19) Chúa đã dùng ách hòa thuận êm ái và mối dây bình an không thể tháo gỡ mà ràng buộc giao ước hôn nhân.

The Lord has bound the covenant of marriage by the yoke of sweet peace and the unbreakable bond of peace.

Table 3. Conceptualisations of MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT

The source domain of A COVENANT		The target domain of MARRIAGE
Hai bên đương sự	→	Vợ chồng hợp pháp
The two parties involved		Legal couple
Thỏa thuận điều khoản quan trọng	→	Điều kiện thực thi hôn nhân
Important Terms Agreement		Conditions for the performance of marriage
Cam kết những điều kiện đề ra	→	Bày tỏ sự ưng thuận
Commit to the conditions set out		Express your consent
Kí kết hợp pháp	→	Tiếp nhận sự ưng thuận
Legally signed		Accept consent
Tình yêu của Thiên Chúa và dân của Người / Hội Thánh	→	Tình yêu của đôi vợ chồng dành cho nhau
Love of God and His People / Church		A couple's love for each other
Thực thi lời hứa của Thiên Chúa	→	Thực thi bổn phận vợ chồng theo luật của Thiên Chúa
Fulfilling God's Promises		Fulfilling the duties of husband and wife according to God's law

MARRIAGE IS A SACRAMENT

In Catholicism, a "sacrament" is a sacred sign perceivable by humans (such as liquids, gestures, and speech) administered by Jesus Christ through the priest to impart divine life and sanctify the Christian journey. Through these external signs, considered "sacred seals," Catholic believers receive an understanding of God's grace towards humanity. The exchange of vows between a man and a woman, uniting them as husband and wife in the marriage rite, signifies their formal reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

The sacramental grace of marriage aims to perfect conjugal love and strengthen the indissoluble unity of the couple through their holy "union." This union allows each person to appreciate the value of marriage as a "sign of love," where two individuals voluntarily join together under the true image of God's love for His people and the Church. By officially receiving this "sacramental gift," MARRIAGE IS UNITY is manifested. The priest, acting as the vicar, imparts "grace" upon the married couple to effectively guide them towards God. Consequently, the couple is supported in their roles as mother and father, husband and wife, by fully embracing holiness in life. They are called to love faithfully for all eternity, mirroring Christ's love for the Church, for which He gave Himself.

The following examples illustrate the concept of this source domain, forming mappings like those in Table 4:

(20) Nay qua bí tích Hôn phối, Chúa đã đến trong gia đình chúng con.

Now, through the sacrament of Matrimony, God has come into our family.

(21) Xin chính Chúa ban ơn trợ giúp phù trì những người Chúa đã làm cho nên phong phú nhờ bí tích Hôn phối.

May the Lord himself grant help to sustain those whom he has enriched through the sacrament of Matrimony.

(22) *Lạy Chúa, được tham dự bữa tiệc của Chúa, chúng con nài xin Chúa cho những người đã kết hợp với nhau bằng bí tích Hôn phối.*

O Lord, to participate in your party, we beseech you for those who have been joined together by the sacrament of Matrimony.

(23) [...] anh (ông) T. và chị (bà) T. vừa liên kết với nhau cách thánh thiện qua bí tích Hôn phối, được khỏe mạnh và được cứu độ muôn đời.

[...] Mr T. and Ms T. have just been holy together through the sacrament of Matrimony. They are healthy and hope to eternal salvation.

(24) Xin Chúa Thánh Thần làm sống lại ơn bí tích cho cặp vợ chồng đang hiện diện nơi đây.

May the Holy Spirit revive the sacramental grace of the couple here.

(25) Đức Kitô, vì lòng từ ái vô biên, đang quảng đại ban ơn sủng, để điều mà bí tích đang thực hiện, sẽ nhắc nhở chúng con chương trình kỳ diệu của tình yêu Chúa.

Because of Christ's boundless mercy, he is generously giving grace, so that what the sacrament which is doing will remind us of the wondrous plan of your love.

(26) Chính mầu nhiệm hôn nhân thánh thiện của họ, khi trở thành dấu chỉ tình yêu của Chúa sẽ thánh hiến tình yêu nhân loại.

Their mysterious holy marriage, which becomes a sign of God's love, consecrates the love of humanity.

(27) Đức Kitô đang rộng tay ban phúc lành cho tình yêu phụ phụ của các con và dùng bí tích đặc biệt mà làm cho các con nên phong phú và vững mạnh.

Christ with outstretched arms blesses your paternal love and by means of a special sacrament enriches and strengthens you.

Table 4. Conceptualisations MARRIAGE IS A SACRAMENT

The source domain of A SACRAMENT		The target domain of MARRIAGE
Dấu chỉ hữu hình	→	Lời nói, hành động cụ thể
Visible signs		Specific words and actions
Thiên Chúa thiết lập, tác động	→	Linh mục đại diện cử hành
God establishes, acts		Priest representing the celebration
Người Công giáo lãnh nhận	→	Đôi vợ chồng Công giáo lãnh nhận
Catholics receive		Catholic couple receive
Tự nguyện lãnh nhận	→	Tự nguyện hiến dâng
Voluntarily accepting		Voluntary donation
Sự hợp nhất bền vững	→	Sự liên kết vững chắc
Sustainable fusion		Solid connection

4.2.3. The meeting between DEATH and MARRIAGE metaphors of Vietnamese Catholic community

DEATH / MARRIAGE IS CHANGE

As previously mentioned, for believers, death is not considered the end but rather conceptualized as a transformative process, marking the beginning of a new life. In this context, "change" signifies a transformation leading to an existence distinct from what was experienced before. While the source domain applies to both DEATH and MARRIAGE, the associated meanings for each are entirely distinct.

Death is viewed as a threshold or gateway through which individuals enter into eternal life, akin to a traveler crossing a river to reach a brighter land on the other side. However, not everyone perceives this "gateway"; it is only through initiating their eternal life, marked by receiving Baptism and officially joining the Church, that individuals embark on this transformative journey. Upon passing away, individuals choose to conclude their earthly existence, allowing their soul to transition into

divine life. This moment marks the transformation of human life from a temporary existence within the body to an eternal existence within the soul, subject to divine judgment.

Additionally, the human body, considered temporary, can return to its "original" state through cremation. Therefore, Catholics believe that God rejuvenates "the flesh of the earth and the lowly", transforming it into a state as beautiful and glorious as God. This process exemplifies the concept of CHANGE, encapsulated in the notion of transitioning from DEATH TO GLORY.

This cultural metaphor is illustrated by the following expressions:

(28) *Sự sống con người chỉ biến đổi, chứ không bị tiêu tan.*

The human life is only changed, but not destroyed.

(29) *Sự sống thay đổi chứ không mất đi, hãy vui lên vì người anh chị em đã về cùng Chúa.*

The life is changed, not lost, rejoice because the brother or sister has returned to the Lord.

(30) *Đức Kitô [...] sẽ biến đổi xác đất vật hèn của chúng ta nên giống thân xác hiển vinh của Người.*

Christ [...] will change our lowly earthly body into the likeness of His glorious body.

Table 5. Conceptualisations of DEATH IS CHANGE

The source domain of CHANGE		The target domain of DEATH
Biến đổi cuộc sống hữu hạn	→	Trở thành cuộc sống vĩnh cửu
Finite life change		Become eternal life
Biến đổi thân xác tạm bợ	→	Trở thành thân xác mới diễm lệ
Temporary body change		Become a new beautiful body
Biến đổi con người tội lỗi	→	Trở thành con người trong sạch
Change the sinful person		Become a pure person

In the context of MARRIAGE, as previously discussed, individuals move from a state of "living in solitary" to welcoming another person with faith into their lives. This person becomes more than a soulmate; they are embraced as a cherished family member. Consequently, both husband and wife are called to deeply love each other. Even for those accustomed to individualism, accepting Catholic marriage involves a gradual transformation where they learn the value of self-sacrifice in specific situations.

The essence of this transformation lies in the care and concern each partner extends to the other, demonstrating a willingness to work hard and make sacrifices, particularly in the face of challenges or illness. The tangible evidence of CHANGE is evident as both individuals undergo personal adjustments and corrections to foster harmony and progress in their married life.

The metaphor "MARRIAGE IS CHANGE" finds expression in the following statements: [Include the specific statements that illustrate how marriage is seen as a transformative process.

(31) *[...] Chúng ta vui mừng sum họp trong nhà Chúa, chung quanh anh (ông) T. và chị (bà) T. trong ngày họ quyết định lập gia đình.*

[...] We joyfully gathered in the house of the Lord, around Mr/Ms. T. and Mr/Ms. T. on the day they decided to get married.

(32) *[...] Để khi được kết hợp với nhau trước bàn thờ Chúa, họ được bền vững trong tình yêu thương nhau.*

[...] So that when they are united before the altar of the Lord, they may be steadfast in their love for one another.

(33) *Sự gì Thiên Chúa kết hợp, loài người không được phân ly.*

What God unites, man must not separate.

(34) *Ước chi nhờ các mầu nhiệm thánh này họ được bền vững thương yêu nhau và kính mến Chúa.*

May they be steadfast in their love for one another and for the Lord through these holy mysteries.

(35) Nhờ ơn Chúa, xin cho các con được bền vững trong tình yêu thương nhau và được sống bình an.

By God's grace, may you be steadfast in your love for one another and live in peace.

(36) Chúa đã dựng nên cho người nam một trợ tá bất khả phân ly là người nữ, để họ không còn là hai, mà là một xương một thịt, và dạy rằng không bao giờ được phân ly điều Chúa đã muốn thiết lập cho nên một.

(37) The Lord created for man an inseparable helper, woman, that they should no longer be two, but one flesh, and taught that there should never be a separation from what the Lord had intended to establish one.

Table 6. Conceptualisations MARRIAGE IS CHANGE

The source domain		The target domain
CHANGE		MARRIAGE
Biến đổi một người nam và một người nữ	→	Trở thành hai vợ chồng hợp pháp
Change a man and a woman		Become a legal couple
Biến đổi hai cá thể riêng biệt	→	Trở thành một gia đình
Change two separate individuals		Become a family
Biến đổi con người đơn độc	→	Trở thành con người đồng hành
Change the lonely person		Become a companion
Thay đổi cái tôi vị kỉ	→	Trở thành cái tôi hoà hợp
Change the selfish ego		Become a compatible self

DEATH/ MARRIAGE IS A JOURNEY

The journey metaphor, as applied to DEATH and MARRIAGE, draws parallels with a lengthy trip. In this extended expedition, individuals often undergo common experiences: adhering to a designated route on a map and utilizing specific modes of transportation as they traverse from one point to another. Throughout the journey, unexpected incidents such as traffic jams or vehicle problems may arise, disrupting or delaying the planned route. Moreover, individuals may deviate from their intended destination by choosing the wrong path, leading them to a dead end, complicating their way forward.

Drawing on these shared characteristics, DEATH and MARRIAGE are conceptualized as journeys, emphasizing that both are intricate processes marked by twists and turns, unforeseen challenges, and the potential for redirection away from the intended path.

JOURNEY emerges as a prevalent source domain for the conceptualization of DEATH, encompassing fundamental properties such as a starting point, destination, route, and obstacles along the way. Expressions like "pass away," "go," "leave," or "to be out of" are historical euphemisms synonymous with the meaning "to die" recorded in dictionaries. Despite their delicacy, they reveal an underlying conceptual metaphor portraying DEATH AS A JOURNEY. "Pass away" delicately denotes the departure of a person's soul or life from the body, while "go" signifies the soul's departure from the body, deeply rooted in Christian tradition. As Bultinck (2009) suggests, "Death implies a shift from presence to absence. This is the most concrete, material experiential basis for the expressions that belong here." Death is conceptualized as the absence of the deceased person, with the living described in terms of the afterlife.

In Catholicism, death is viewed as a transition between life on earth and eternal life. The Catholic community divides this journey into three stages, corresponding to three complementary and parallel conceptualizations: ENDING TO THE EARTH, RETURNING TO THE HEAVEN, and DIRECTING TO THE REBORN. Catholics literally believe that the soul embarks on a journey to a superior realm upon leaving its corporeal form, considering death as a temporary conclusion to earthly life. This transition opens a new threshold for humans to return to eternal life with God, who granted them life. Hence, a sub-cultural metaphor emerges: DEATH IS THE START OF A NEW LIFE.

We define this source domain through expressions belonging to the target conceptual domain of DEATH, as follows:

(38) Chúng ta thành khẩn cầu nguyện cho ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. mới qua đời, xin Chúa ban thưởng cho ông/bà/anh/chị/em sau khi kết thúc cuộc đời trần thế, được về quê trời, vui hưởng cuộc sống đời đời.

We fervently pray for T has just passed away, may God reward T. after ending his/her earthly life, he/she could return to heavenly homeland, and enjoy the eternal life.

(39) Sự chết chưa phải là kết thúc tất cả, nhưng là cửa ngõ tiến vào sự sống đời đời.

Death is not the end of all, but it is a gateway to the eternal life.

(40) Nhờ được lãnh bí tích Thánh tẩy, ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. đã khởi sự đời sống vĩnh cửu ngay khi còn sống ở trần gian này.

Through Baptism, Mr./Ms. T. began eternal life while on this earth.

(41) Người anh (chị) em của chúng con được chia sẻ vinh quang với Đức Kitô.

Our family/relatives have been shared with Christ's glory.

(42) Chúng ta cầu xin cho ông/bà/anh/chị/em được hưởng vinh quang Phục sinh với Đức Kitô.

We pray that Mr./Ms. T. may enjoy the glory of the Resurrection of Christ.

(43) Ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. được tham dự vào đời sống phục sinh của Người đến muôn đời.

Mr./Ms. T has participated in Christ's resurrection life for all eternity.

(44) Ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. [...] đã rời ngôi nhà trần gian để về nhà đời đời, đã lìa bỏ thân nhân gia đình để về với Ba Ngôi Thiên Chúa.

Mr./Ms T. [...] left the earthly home to return to an eternal home, left family and friends to return to the Trinity.

(45) Lạy Cha, Cha đã gọi ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. ra khỏi thế gian này về với Cha.

Father, You called Mr./Ms. T. out of this world and return to You.

(46) Xin cho người con Cha đây được thoát vòng tội lỗi, được đón nhận vào Nước Cha, [...] chờ ngày thân xác phục sinh.

May this son of yours be freed from sin, be accepted into your kingdom, wait for the resurrection of the body.

(47) Chúng ta đang thương tiếc người thân của chúng ta vừa được Chúa gọi về.

We are mourning our loved one who has just been called by the Lord.

(48) Chúng ta vẫn có một nơi ở trên trời [...]. Đó là ngôi nhà vĩnh cửu mà chúng ta ai nấy cũng sẽ trở về.

We still have a place in heaven [...]. It is the eternal home to which we will all return.

(49) Lạy Chúa, đã đến lúc ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. từ giã căn nhà này.

Dear God, it's time for Mr./Ms. T. to leave this house.

(50) Thân xác con người [...] đến ngày tận thế sẽ được sống lại.

The human body [...] will be resurrected at the end of time.

(51) Khi qua khỏi cõi trần, ta lại về với Thiên Chúa.

When we leave the world, we return to God.

(52) Chúa đã gọi T. về, mình cùng cầu nguyện để T. mau về thiên đàng với Chúa.

God called Mr./Ms. T. to come back, let's pray together so that Mr./Ms. T. can go to heaven with God quickly.

(53) Chúng con cậy vì danh Chúa nhân từ, xin cho linh hồn T. được hưởng nhan Thánh Chúa trên nước thiên đàng, được gặp mặt Đức Chúa Trời sáng láng vui vẻ vô cùng. Amen.

We hope in the name of the merciful God, that T.'s soul may enjoy the kingdom of heaven, and meet the bright and joyful God. Amen.

(54) Trong niềm tin vào Chúa Kitô (từ nạn và) Phục Sinh, gia đình chúng tôi trân trọng báo tin ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. (...), sinh năm ... đã được Chúa gọi về lúc: ...

In faith in Christ (death and) Resurrection, our family respectfully announce that Mr./Ms. T. (...), was born in ..., was called by God at: ...

(55) Trong niềm tin vào sự Phục sinh của Chúa Giêsu Kitô, giáo khu (...) giáo xứ (...) xin thông báo OBACE T. (...), sinh năm ..., đã được Chúa gọi về nhà Cha vào lúc ...

In faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the diocese (...) of parish (...) would like to announce that T. (...), born in ..., was called to the Father's house by the Lord at...

(56) Xin quý Cộng đoàn hiệp ý cầu nguyện cho linh hồn ông/bà/anh/chị/em T. được sớm về trước Thiên Nhan Chúa.

Please join us in praying for Mr./Ms. T.'s soul to return to heaven soon.

(57) Ông/bà/anh/chị/em T., sinh năm ... đã về nhà Chúa lúc: ...

Mr./Ms T..., who was born in ..., went to the house of God at: ...

(58) Xin cộng đoàn hiệp ý cầu nguyện cho linh hồn T. sớm hưởng phúc Thiên đàng / sớm hưởng nhan Thánh Chúa.

Please join the community to pray for T.'s soul soon to enjoy the blessings of Heaven/the presence of the Holy Spirit.

(59) Chết là giải thoát, là một mối lợi.

Death is rescue and a gain.

Table 7. Conceptualisations of DEATH IS A JOURNEY

The source domain of		The target domain of
A JOURNEY		DEATH
Starting point	→	Temporary life on earth
Way	→	The process of living on earth
Destination	→	Eternal Life in Heaven
Partner	→	Family, God, Our Lady and Saints
Barrier	→	Guilty
Luggage	→	Pure soul

The married life of a Catholic couple is metaphorically depicted as a new journey on Earth. This journey is characterized by moments of smooth sailing as well as encounters with inevitable storms. The challenges arise from imperfections, defects, or the pursuit of materialism by both partners. In marriages involving different faiths or with a newly converted partner, these challenges become more pronounced. Two individuals, each with their own spiritual lives, may experience conflicts, make inadvertent wrong choices leading to mistakes for themselves and others, or succumb to the temptation of money and fame, making the preservation of loyalty and spiritual connection more difficult. It becomes crucial for couples to respect each other's religious beliefs, find ways to harmonize their children's education, and practice moral values together, such as attending church and participating in ancestral ceremonies for righteousness. More importantly, the couple must learn how to invite God to be an active presence in their family life. This metaphorical journey underscores the importance of navigating challenges together, maintaining spiritual unity, and inviting divine guidance into the shared life of the couple.

Since then, the JOURNEY source domain has similar attributes assigned to the target conceptual domain MARRIAGE through the following table:

Table 8. Conceptualisations of MARRIAGE IS A JOURNEY

The source domain of		The target domain of
JOURNEY		MARRIAGE
Starting point	→	Organize a wedding
Destination	→	Live forever together
Partner	→	Couple (Husband and Wife)
Distance	→	Time to live together
Vehicle	→	Emotional, material

Speed	→	Marriage is progressing
Crossroads	→	Option
Stuck	→	Contradictions, obstacles

The expressions in the marriage rites that represent the JOURNEY are not as rich as the funeral rites. However, we consider more in the prayers offered by the priest at Mass, as well as in the prayers at home, in order to further concretize this conceptual domain.

(60) Anh/Em là T. (...) nhận em/anh T. (...) làm vợ/chồng của anh/em và hứa giữ lòng chung thủy với em/anh, khi thịnh vượng cũng như lúc gian nan, khi mạnh khỏe cũng như lúc đau yếu, để yêu thương và tôn trọng em/anh mọi ngày suốt đời anh/em.

I am T. (...) accept you - T. (...) as your wife/husband and I promise to remain faithful to you, in good times as well as in bad times, when in health as well as in sickness, to love and respect you every day of your life.

(61) Những người Chúa cho sinh hoa trái trong tình yêu, cũng được Chúa cho trở nên nhân chứng của tình yêu ấy.

Those whom the Lord gives to bear fruit in love, are also given by God to be witnesses of that love.

(62) Các con mãi mãi chung thủy với nhau và đảm nhận những trách nhiệm khác của hôn nhân.
You remain faithful to each other and assume the other responsibilities of marriage.

(63) [...] Biết luôn gắn bó với Chúa và rao truyền danh Chúa cho mọi người.

[...] Know how to always stick to God and proclaim God's name to everyone.

(64) [...] Sau khi được cùng với đông đảo bạn bè bao quanh vui hưởng tuổi già đầm phúc, các con được đạt tới nước trời.

[...] After being surrounded by many friends, and enjoyed a happy old age, you may be reached to the kingdom of heaven.

In the Vietnamese Catholic community, DEATH and MARRIAGE are conceptualized as journeys, each leading to distinct destinations. These journeys are viewed as personal choices, deeply rooted in individuals' strong faith and trust in a benevolent Father who welcomes them with open arms and expresses affection. This perspective extends to both the departed, beginning a new life beyond, and to two individuals creating a new life in this world through marriage. Within the Catholic faith, believers embrace these journeys, despite their challenges and occasional disorientation, living their lives in a manner that transforms their final day into a profoundly beautiful experience. This concept underscores the profound faith guiding individuals through life's challenges of death and transformation, as well as through the transformative journey of marriage.

5. Conclusion

Language is perceived as a distributed system and repository of cultural concepts, allowing humans to encode ideas that reflect their cultural experiences through perception. In Catholicism, followers' beliefs are rooted in the Bible, foundational doctrines, familiar hymns, and teachings from the Holy Spirit. Despite this shared foundation and spiritual orientation, within the Vietnamese Catholic community, perception is distributed, influenced by individual interpretations shaped by language practices.

Exploring the cultural metaphors of DEATH and MARRIAGE in Vietnamese Catholic funeral and marriage rites reveals the community's expression of beliefs through distinct conceptual frameworks. These frameworks, such as JOURNEY, REPRESENTATION, CONVENTIONS, and SPARKS, are widely accepted among Vietnamese Catholics, shaping their perceptions of DEATH and MARRIAGE. These shared metaphors highlight commonalities in how Christians perceive these significant life events.

This overarching perspective is shaped not only by physical experiences but also by specific living conditions and local customs. Exploring the concepts of DEATH and MARRIAGE provides profound insights into the challenging spiritual journey of Catholic faithful. It requires them to be mindful of their responsibilities as human beings, understand the meaning of their existence, and consequently, know how to communicate with God, Mary, the saints, and others for intercession, whether for the deceased or within the context of double marriage.

Voluntariness and a sense of unity contribute to shaping each Catholic into a more complete individual and exemplary citizen of the future Kingdom of Heaven. Whether it's the priest conducting rites during the Funeral Mass and Matrimony Mass in the church, or a designated representative (even a parishioner) conducting rites outside the church, these practices foster a stronger bond among Catholic members.

Exploring the target domains of DEATH and MARRIAGE reveals distinct perceptions among believers. These differences serve as thresholds for surrender and offering prayers and blessings to God fervently, for the happiness and well-being of those who remain. This distinction marks a significant aspect of happiness for Vietnamese Catholics, setting them apart from the broader Vietnamese community outside Catholicism.

Notes:

¹ From a theological perspective, Catholic missionaries strongly condemned the practice of ancestor worship in Vietnam, because it was seen to be colored by superstition, especially against the belief in worshipping only one God.

² The Council is a conference that convenes all the offices of the universal Catholic Church and the local Catholic churches around the world. In particular, Vatican Council II is the 21st general Council (ecumenical council). It is the largest Council in the history of the Roman Catholic Church, which was opened on October 11, 1962 by Pope John XXIII.

³ These strict regulations were temporarily lifted by the 1939 exhortation of the Congregation for Evangelization. They only really ended when the Second Vatican Council ended on December 8, 1965.

⁴ Death is the beginning of a new life, which Catholic theology optimistically called death is the day and time a person is born (equivalent to a birthday). In other words, when you die in this life, you will be born in heaven. This concept is considered unique to a Catholic community.

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Nhận thức văn hoá và ẩn dụ văn hoá:

Nghiên cứu nghi thức tang lễ và kết hôn của cộng đồng người Việt Công giáo

TÓM TẮT: Thực hành nghi thức trong tang lễ và kết hôn không chỉ thể hiện qua các hành động cụ thể mà còn qua ngôn ngữ. Từ việc đi sâu tìm hiểu quá trình ý niệm hoá văn hoá về CÁI CHẾT và HÔN NHÂN, bài viết nhằm khám phá nhận thức văn hoá của cộng đồng người Việt Công giáo, qua đó, làm nổi bật những nét đặc thù so với cộng đồng người Việt theo phong tục truyền thống, cũng như nhóm tín đồ thuộc tôn giáo khác. Thông qua phương pháp định lượng và định tính, kết hợp với một số phương pháp nghiên cứu thuộc Ngôn ngữ học văn hoá, bài viết này xác định những đặc trưng cơ bản trong nhận thức văn hoá của người Việt Công giáo dựa trên nguồn ngữ liệu gồm các câu chuyện trong Thánh Kinh, bài giảng giáo lý và thực hành nghi lễ của nhóm người Việt tại địa phương. Từ đó, các ẩn dụ văn hoá tiêu biểu được thể hiện thông qua 90 biểu ngôn thường được thực hiện trong tang lễ và hôn lễ của người Việt Công giáo cũng sẽ được làm rõ. Kết quả bài viết còn cho thấy được mối tương quan giữa những miền ý niệm nguồn như CUỘC HÀNH TRÌNH, SỰ BIẾN ĐỔI và CUỘC ĐOÀN TỤ và miền ý niệm đích CÁI CHẾT và HÔN NHÂN trong nhận thức của đạo Công giáo, qua đó, cộng đồng văn hoá khác có thể hiểu rõ hơn tâm thức của người tín hữu Công giáo tại Việt Nam.

TỪ KHOÁ: nhận thức văn hoá; ẩn dụ văn hoá; ý niệm hoá văn hoá; Ngôn ngữ học văn hoá; nghi thức; cộng đồng người Việt Công giáo.