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HOW RELIGION MIGHT INFORM OUR CONCEPTUALISATION OF REALITY
A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

The meaning-making process is a central focus of study of both Cognitive linguistics and religion. It is also a fundamental issue in studies on intertextuality. In this paper, I will look at how we are able to interpret theological intertexts by explaining intertextuality not only on the linguistic level, but also in terms of the underlying cognitive processes. To do this, I will specifically refer to the cognitive framework known as conceptual blending.

I aim to show firstly that conceptual blending underpins intertextuality. Thus, intertextuality is not merely reliant on the linguistic interpretation of texts, but relies on cognitive processes such as conceptual blending which enable the interpretation or meaning-making process of intertextual texts. Secondly, investigating intertextual texts from a cognitive perspective reveals new inferences and the complex creativity involved in the meaning-making process. Thirdly, the meaning-making process is explained as being based on conceptual structures and processes rather than on purely linguistic structures and processes, and lastly, meaning is highly contextual and the meaning-making process is influenced and structured by both conscious and unconscious knowledge, including our knowledge of societal or cultural myths and religions.

The data I used is an article written by Maluleke, titled 'Of collapsible coffins and ways of dying: the search for catholic contextuality in African perspective' and some of its intertexts.

Keywords: cognition, conceptual blending, intertextuality, meaning-making process, religious frame

1. Introduction

Language and religion are both central themes in the evolution of the human species and both these phenomena have contributed to the meaning-making process in very specific ways. Many of the aphorisms and proverbs we use in everyday language, for example *he has the patience of Job*, are based on

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religious ideas and reflect the influence that religion may have had on the way we think. In this paper, I will look at how religious concepts are used in intertexts and how we are able to construct meaning from these texts cognitively by using the cognitive process known as conceptual blending. This is a small-scale study which forms part of a larger study on intertextuality and, therefore, reflects only preliminary ideas on the possible influence of religion on our conceptualisation of reality, which I am currently investigating in more depth. As the study uses intertexts as data, including subjective interpretation as a type of intertext, it should be noted that the conceptual blending networks reflect this and that the ideas put forward reveal Maluleke's subjective interpretation of events and my subjective understanding of what he is saying rather than general truths [1]. I will now briefly introduce Cognitive science and Cognitive linguistics and then explain what conceptual blending is and how it works. Thereafter I will discuss the theory of intertextuality and explain how it could be used in a theological context.

2. Cognitive science and Cognitive linguistics

Cognitive science is an interdisciplinary field that investigates the structures and processes of the mind. It draws on knowledge from fields such as Philosophy, Linguistics, Psychology, Artificial intelligence and the neurosciences in order to explain the cognitive development of human faculties such as perception, reasoning, memory and so on [2, 3]. Cognitive linguistics, in a similar fashion, aims to describe language as a cognitive function. Language is no longer studied in isolation or for its properties only, but rather in relation to the mind and other cognitive processes [4]. It is thus assumed that language is a reflection of thought and as such, reflects conceptual structure (or knowledge representation) and conceptual organisation (or the meaning-making process).

One of the main concerns of Cognitive linguistics is the nature of thought and how it is reflected in language, specifically because the way we think is much more complex than what language as a system of signs can account for. In other words, the meanings we attach to words are much more complex than a mere word-object or word-concept relation can justify. One of the cognitive processes that enables this complex meaning-making process is conceptual blending as was first described and schematically represented by Fauconnier and Turner [5]. I will now give a short exposition of the theory.
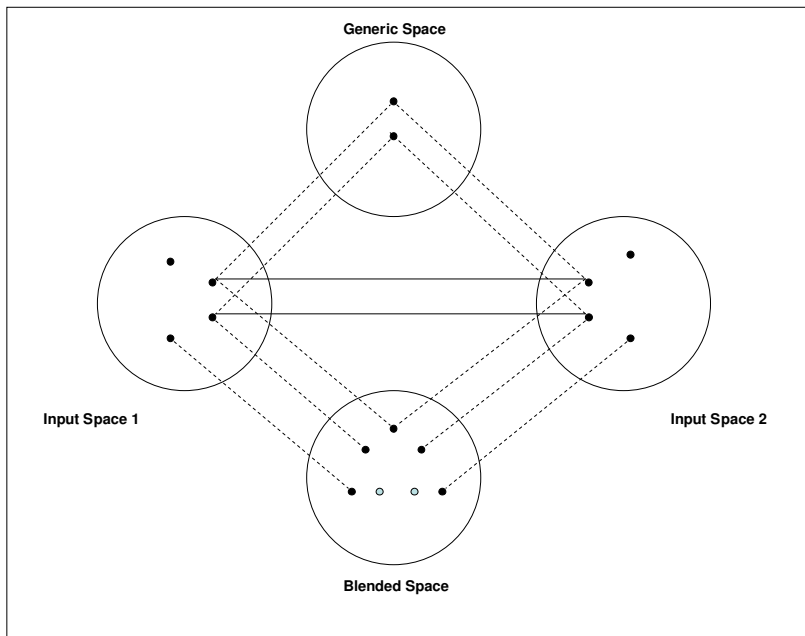
3. Conceptual Blending Theory

Conceptual Blending Theory is based on two other cognitive semantic theories, namely Conceptual Metaphor Theory which proposes that our general conceptual organisation is largely metaphorical, and Mental Spaces Theory which claims that meaning construction is guided contextually by language [6]. Conceptual Blending Theory then developed because formal form manipulation, though useful in some disciplines, could not account for the myriad creative

processes involved in thought and language. Accordingly, though formal form manipulation can account for the grammatical structures of language in certain ways, it cannot extract meaning or account for the many ways in which different people, for example, may construct different meanings from the same text. It also does not explain why language exists in the first place, why it evolved in the ways it did or why we use it in the ways we do.

When we use language, we integrate many different concepts and compress these ideas into a limited amount of words and sentences. We then decompress the language we read or hear to construct meaning from it. This process is far more complex than anything captured or modelled by formal form manipulation and in order to explain this cognitive process, Fauconnier and Turner [5] developed Conceptual Blending Theory. Conceptual blending is the human ability to draw parallels between elements from different conceptual domains and is iconically represented by what is known as conceptual blending networks.

Conceptual blending networks represent fundamental creative conceptual processes and as such have iconic representations for specific cognitive functions. Each conceptual blending network has at least two mental input spaces as well as a generic space and the blended space with cross-space mappings that show how concepts, thoughts and words are integrated. The network is a static illustration of mental processes but the processes themselves, though captured in a static diagram, are dynamic. Also, meaning-making takes place throughout the entire network and not only in the blended space. A basic conceptual blending network looks as follows [5, p. 46]:

Figure 1. A Conceptual Blending Network.

Input Space 1 and Input Space 2 represent mental spaces in our minds. These mental spaces are defined as "small conceptual packets" that we construct for instantaneous understanding [5, p. 40]. These mental spaces are thus conceptual domains. Therefore, words and sentences which are limited by form prompt meaning construction in these conceptual domains or mental spaces. In turn, mental spaces rely on frames (based on what is known as schema theory in Psychology) which represent our long-term schematic knowledge of our experience at a conceptual level, such as may be prompted by religious or theological frames. Thus, frames describe how we represent the knowledge that we have and also how we are able to access and use that knowledge. Mental spaces are thus informed by frames and are dynamic in nature. As such, they can be modified to aid understanding or meaning-construction as needed within specific contexts, i.e. the conceptual content from different domains of understanding (frames) is used to construct local understanding in the mental spaces. The lines in the diagram correspond to neural activity and represent the correlations between elements, such as the correlation between the word *God* and the concept *God*. The Generic Space contains all the elements that the input spaces have in common and as such, reflects how our minds are able to extract meaning from different conceptual domains, find commonalities between them and then construct meaning within a specific context. The Blended Space contains structure from both input spaces as well as structure that is not evident in the input spaces which Fauconnier and Turner [5, p. 40] call *emergent (conceptual) structure*. Emergent structure is thus the result of the process of blending conceptual content from different conceptual domains in specific contexts and accounts for the many meanings we attach to language that cannot be represented by formal form manipulation.

During the process of conceptual blending, many complex cognitive procedures take place that influence our meaning-construction. One such a procedure is that of Vital Relations. The cross-space mappings between the elements in the different input spaces are enabled by Vital Relations. There are many types and sub-types, but I will only discuss those relevant to the study in this paper. Evans and Green [6, p. 418], and Fauconnier and Turner [5, p. 93] may be consulted for a more detailed description. The Vital Relations relevant to this study are Identity, Analogy, Disanalogy and Property. The examples are taken from Van Heerden [7] though the examples for Analogy and Disanalogy have been modified for this paper and can be described as follows:

- Identity is one of the most fundamental Vital Relations. It occurs when, for example, one serves a bottle of red wine at dinner one evening and uses the same bottle as a candle holder on a different evening. The *identity* of the bottle remains the same even though its *function* changes.
- Analogy, as is implied, draws on parallels in the input spaces. When we say something like *Richard Dawkins is the contemporary Darwin*, we are drawing on parallels between Richard Dawkins and Darwin, such as that they are both concerned with Evolutionary biology.

- Disanalogy is rooted in Analogy but relies on differences rather than parallels. The example used to illustrate Analogy also relies on Disanalogy in that Richard Dawkins and Darwin are two completely different individuals from different time periods (Disanalogy) who share certain elements (Analogy).
- Property is a very straightforward Vital Relation. A yellow flower, for example, has the property *yellow*.

I will now give a short exposition of the theory of intertextuality.

4. Intertextuality

The term *intertextuality* was first coined by Julia Kristeva in the late 1960s in her essay translated as 'Word, Dialogue and Novel' [8] but is rooted in the works of Mikhail Bakhtin and Roland Barthes, amongst others. It refers to the idea that texts are embedded in and constructed from other texts, but also that the process of meaning-making is not a linear act, but rather reliant on a number of texts, as well as a person's world knowledge which forms a kind of context, or intertext. As I will not be evaluating the sources on intertextuality in this paper, but only be giving a brief overview of the theory of intertextuality, I will not comment on the distinct French authority apparent in the literature on intertextuality, except to mention it here. I have included the ideas of Bakhtin (a Russian), Barthes and Kristeva (both French) in my discussion but readers who wish to explore the French influence may refer to the works of Foucault, Angenot, Derrida, Girard and Ricoeur, that are also included in some of the sources sited in the next paragraph (such as [9]).

Bakhtin and Bathes, in the post-structuralist tradition, question the structuralist semiotics [10] of linguists such as Ferdinand de Saussure and set out to explain that meaning is not solely derived from the internal structures of texts, such as its morphology and syntax. Instead, the human factor is included in the meaning-making process and as such, no text is viewed as an autonomous entity any longer. Worton and Still [11] give two reasons for this: firstly, all writers are also readers of texts and are thus influenced by them and secondly, because texts can only be produced by reading other texts, these texts are layered with tensions that pertain to, for example, the cultural, social, political, historical and emotional environments of both authors and readers. As such, the meaning intended by the author is not necessarily the meaning constructed by the reader. For this reason, Barthes argued against the idea that the author is the creator of meaning, a tenet that was still widely accepted in his time. He argued that meaning resides in the reader and that authors merely exist to create texts [9, 12, 13]. Thus, meaning is not purely derived from the words we read as those words have already been influenced by previous texts, as well as by our own experiences and world knowledge. This idea that texts and meaning are influenced by for example social and historical contexts was especially evident in the works of Bakhtin who showed that meaning cannot be viewed as a fixed reality, but rather as fluid and dependent on context [14, 15].

These ideas do not however belong solely to Bakhtin and the French scholars mentioned here, but was also explored by many other intellectuals in many other disciplines, such as Gadamer's hermeneutics, the philosophy of Wittgenstein, Habermas's communication theories and so on [16].

Despite the fact that the idea of intertextuality was present in the works of scholars like Bakhtin and Barthes, no theorist brought these ideas together quite in the same coherent fashion as Julia Kristeva [8, 17-19]. She proposed three coordinates, also sometimes called dimensions of dialogue, namely "writing subject, addressee and exterior texts" [8, p. 36]. She defined the word's status both horizontally and vertically, thus showing how a text belongs to both the writing subject (or author) and addressee (or reader) on the horizontal axis, and to other texts and intertexts or contexts on the vertical axis.

In the next section, I apply conceptual blending to theological intertexts to show how we are able to interpret these intertexts cognitively and how religious and theological concepts may influence our conceptual processes. Intertextuality and our ability to understand intertexts are explored here within a theological context as a preliminary study to investigate the influence that these types of texts and conceptual frameworks may have on our conceptualisation of the world in general.

5. Application

5.1. Intertextuality in theological texts and intertexts

Earlier I explained that Cognitive linguistics marries the study of cognition with the study of language. Thus, Cognitive linguistics aims to describe and explain conceptual structures and processes by observing language in order to make sense of how people construct meaning. Similarly, intertextuality aims to explain the meaning-making process, though only from linguistic and literary perspectives. In the same way that cognitive linguistics and intertextuality can be seen as conceptual frameworks, religion can also be seen as a type of conceptual framework that may influence the way in which we construct meaning. For example, a child who grows up believing in a religion-specific god-entity and its associated conceptual framework may conceptualise his/her experience in terms of that specific religious frame, such as a Christian frame or an Islamic frame, each with their own specific rules, attitudes, symbols and linguistic signifiers. A child who grows up not believing in a religion-specific god-entity may, in turn, conceptualise his/her experiences in a very different way and according to a different conceptual framework. To see how this may occur, we will now look at how T.S. Maluleke reasons or explains certain events and attitudes in his article [1]. Maluleke, a scholar, theologian and preacher has deep knowledge and understanding of the ways in which African traditions have become entwined in Christian doctrine, though it should be noted again that the ideas presented here are his subjective interpretation of events and attitudes (as I understand him to mean them) which

is not without bias and generalisations. This text is only a small case study and therefore reveals only preliminary findings which I am currently investigating in more depth. As a consequence, the input spaces for each conceptual blending network represent how I understand what Maluleke is trying to say. The meanings revealed in the conceptual blends are highly subjective and do not reflect universal truths, but rather what Maluleke is saying and how I interpret what he is saying. Maluleke's article is available on the internet and should be read in conjunction with this article for a more meaningful understanding of how conceptual blending facilitates our interpretation of theological intertexts.

I will now briefly describe Maluleke's article and the intertexts embedded in it, namely *Ways of Dying* [20], *Out of America* [21] and two national anthems, namely the unofficial *God Bless America* and the official *God Bless Africa*. Thereafter I will apply conceptual blending to these intertexts to show that conceptual blending does in fact underpin intertextuality. I will also show how our conceptualisation of the world may be shaped by religious concepts.

5.1.1. Of collapsible coffins and ways of dying

In this article, Maluleke examines the myth of self-reinvention by observing globalisation and its effects in general, but also on human relationships in particular. In his view, globalisation, rather than improving a sense of community, has in fact increased xenophobic feelings between nations. To illustrate this point, Maluleke refers to the attack on the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001, also known as 9/11. He compares what he calls the once-off suffering of America to the continual struggles of Africa to demonstrate how, in his view, the *American Dream* is idealised as the dream for all nations. Consequently, the suffering of the U.S. becomes the suffering of all nations, but the suffering of Africa and other nations often goes unnoticed. This view does of course not represent the general global feeling, but rather conveys Maluleke's views on the lack of true catholicity.

In his article there are a number of implicit (or implied) and explicit (or directly cited) intertexts. I will refer only to those related to Mda's *Ways of Dying*, Richburg's *Out of America* and the two national anthems mentioned earlier.

5.1.2. Ways of Dying

In *Ways of Dying* [20], Zakes Mda tells the story of a fictional informal settlement in South Africa. The story satirises the rituals of mourning and in many ways, the ways of dying in the squatter camp is, for Maluleke, analogous to the ways of dying in the world with an inherent competition for the most spectacular way of dying, embodied by 9/11 in this context, albeit from a Western point of view.

In the book, we meet Toloki, a professional mourner and Nefolovhodwe, a coffin maker who invents a collapsible coffin that can be carried like a suitcase and is quick to assemble. Death comes easily to the inhabitants of this informal settlement and thus needs to be dealt with swiftly and candidly. Though funny at times, the weight of the causality rate does not go unnoticed. In his paper, Maluleke uses this story to illustrate the commonplace of death in Africa and to contrast this with the way in which 9/11 was dealt with. Africans deal with death, disease, hunger and war on a daily basis, yet in Maluleke's view, this passes unnoticed by the rest of the world. In contrast, the deaths resulting from the events of 9/11 were globally recognised and mourned by all. It should be noted that these and other observations made by Maluleke are based on his emotional response to *Out of America* and should be regarded as such.

5.1.3. Out of America

This book [21] was written by Keith Richburg, a black American journalist, who was posted in Nairobi as foreign correspondent for the Washington Post. In it, he records his experiences in Africa and specifically recalls events in Somalia and Rwanda which he uses to justify his view that Africans are inhumane.

In a paragraph, Richburg describes his feelings as he leaves to return to America. Maluleke uses this text as a framework or intertext for imagining a parallel situation with the cards turned, substituting certain words and phrases with words and phrases of his own to illustrate his views on globalisation and the Western monopoly on world politics and sympathy. I will illustrate how this framework is used in Section 6.1.2.

5.1.4. Two national anthems

As I mentioned earlier, Maluleke looks at two national anthems, namely the unofficial *God Bless America* and the official *God Bless Africa* to illustrate the rituals of mourning. He writes [1]: "Having noted the place of Berlin's 'God Bless America' in the rituals of mourning and national reinvention in the USA, I now wish to explore its significance further by comparing it to the song 'God Bless Africa' … As I listened to Americans singing 'God Bless America' I could not help thinking that the national anthem of my own country, and that of several East and Southern African countries, is called 'God Bless Africa'. During times of despair, I have wondered if Americans would fare better than Africans in their prayerful request before God. Do they sing it like people who are used to being blessed by God – or do they sing it because, as Africans sing their song, they often feel abandoned and forgotten by God?"

Here, the idea of the competition comes to the fore again. *Who will win God's affection? Who will God choose to bless?* These ideas are explored by Maluleke in terms of catholicity and globalisation and will be discussed in Section 6.1.3.

6. Discussion and results

### 6.1. *Conceptual blending and the meaning-making process in theological intertexts*

I will now apply the framework of conceptual blending to the intertexts in order to show how we are able to interpret these intertexts cognitively and how our religious framework may inform and/or aid our conceptualisation of the world. I will do this by representing the texts and intertexts in conceptual blending networks. This will reveal whether intertextuality is in fact underpinned by conceptual blending and show how religion, whether conscious knowledge or unconscious knowledge, may influence the ways in which we construct meaning.

6.1.1. *The ways of dying conceptual blending network*

The first conceptual blending network I will discuss is related to Mda's book entitled *Ways of Dying* and the ways of dying found in everyday life. Input Space 1 contains knowledge of the different ways of dying found in Mda's book, e.g. dying from a disease or being killed and is based on our familiarity with a funeral procession in general as well as knowledge of the character Toloki, a professional mourner in *Ways of Dying* and what his profession entails (background frame). Input Space 2 represents our knowledge of other ways of dying encountered in the world, e.g. dying in a car accident or committing suicide and is also based on our familiarity with a funeral procession as well as our experience or knowledge of other ways of dying. The Vital Relations that occur in this blend are Analogy based on Identity relations. According to Fauconnier and Turner [5, p. 95], identity relations "may be the most basic Vital Relation". In these two input spaces, we understand that any way of dying is the same basic concept (i.e. *a way of dying*), but that there are different ways of dying (in a car accident, from a disease, etc.). These elements thus prompt cross-space mappings in that they share a commonality (a way of dying), even though there are many different ways of dying.

In the blended space it becomes clear that there is a competition for the most spectacular way of dying (this idea is presented in Mda's book) and that 9/11 is now seen as the victor of this competition. This is based on our knowledge of the nature of a competition, i.e. there is only one winner (either an individual or a team) who receives a prize and/or glory for winning. The emergent structure reveals the idea of the competition with 9/11 as the winner. (These ideas are prompted by Maluleke's interpretation of things as presented in his article.) As winner of this *ways-of-dying competition*, America is rewarded with a mass funeral with the world as professional mourners. (The idea of a professional mourner is presented in Mda's book, as mentioned earlier.) In this network, an analogy is drawn between the ways of dying in Mda's book and the ways of dying encountered everyday in the world around us. Though Maluleke

never says it overtly, it is implied that 9/11 is comparable to a mass funeral with the world looking on as professional mourners (which becomes apparent through *elaboration* or the running of the blend). In this blend, it is understood that 9/11 is now seen as the most spectacular way of dying. This becomes clearer when we understand that there is a ways-of-dying competition inherent in the composition of this network. The idea of the competition is not present in the input spaces but becomes apparent in the blend. In the blended space, we have the result of the competition: a winner, which in this case is the 9/11 incident. As the victor of this ways-of-dying competition, America (the U.S.) also wins the empathy of the world; the idea of the mass funeral with the world as professional mourners. These ideas are of course gross generalisations. However, they are not meant to reflect universal truths but rather subjective interpretations. The network will look as follows:
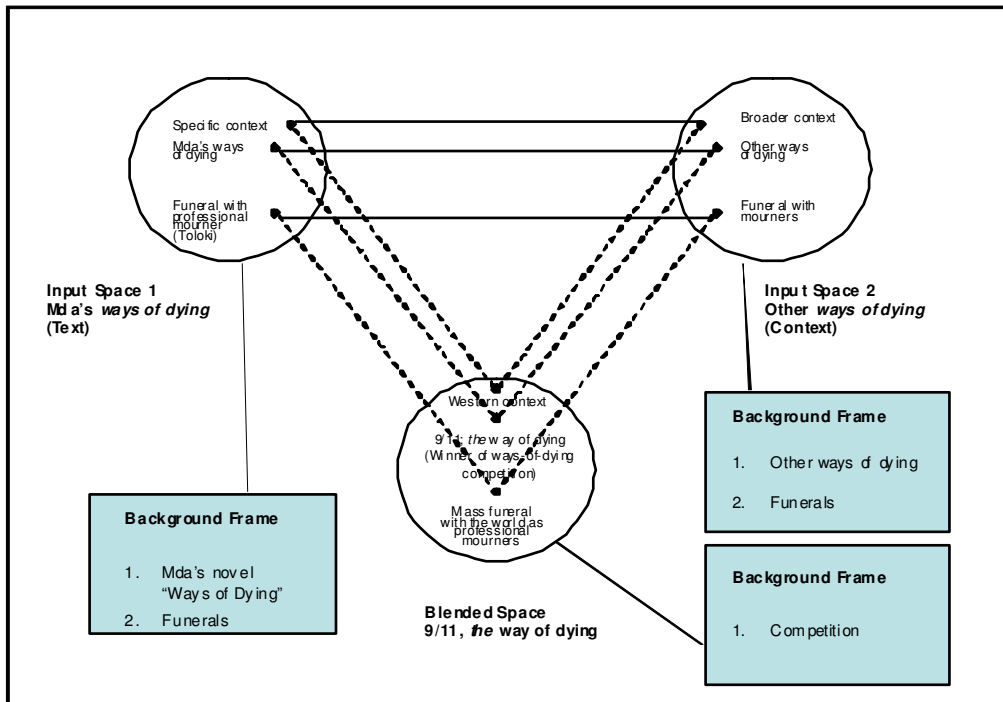
Figure 2. The ways of dying network.

6.1.2. The portable collapsible coffins conceptual blending network

Like the first intertextual reference, this one is also encountered in Maluleke's title and though it is read first, it is better understood after the *ways of dying* reference. Maluleke uses the idea of a portable collapsible coffin as an analogy for the many different types of 'collapsible coffins' we use everyday, such as an airplane which was the 9/11 collapsible coffin. Input Space 1 represents Mda's coffins that are portable and collapsible, as well as the idea (in the composition) that these coffins carry one on a journey from this life to the

next (afterlife). The background frame constitutes our knowledge of Mda's portable, collapsible coffins, i.e. an awareness of this idea in Mda's book. Input Space 2 contains the idea that airplanes (the 9/11 airplane) can transport people (*portable*) on a journey from A to B. These airplanes are fragile (*collapsible*) and consequently may become a *way of dying*. The properties of an airplane, namely that it serves as a form of transportation, but also the idea that airplanes are fragile, makes up the background frame for Input Space 2. The Vital Relations present in this conceptual blending network are also Analogy based on Identity relations. Here the properties of a coffin (*portable*, *collapsible*) correspond with the properties of an airplane (*transportation*, *fragile*). We understand that even though a coffin and an airplane are two very different concepts, they share identity relations or similar properties that map onto each other. The coffin carries a dead person and the airplane carries people who are still alive (which means that Disanalogy plays a role here), but the fact that these people are on a journey (either from this life to the afterlife or from point A to B) maps onto each other.
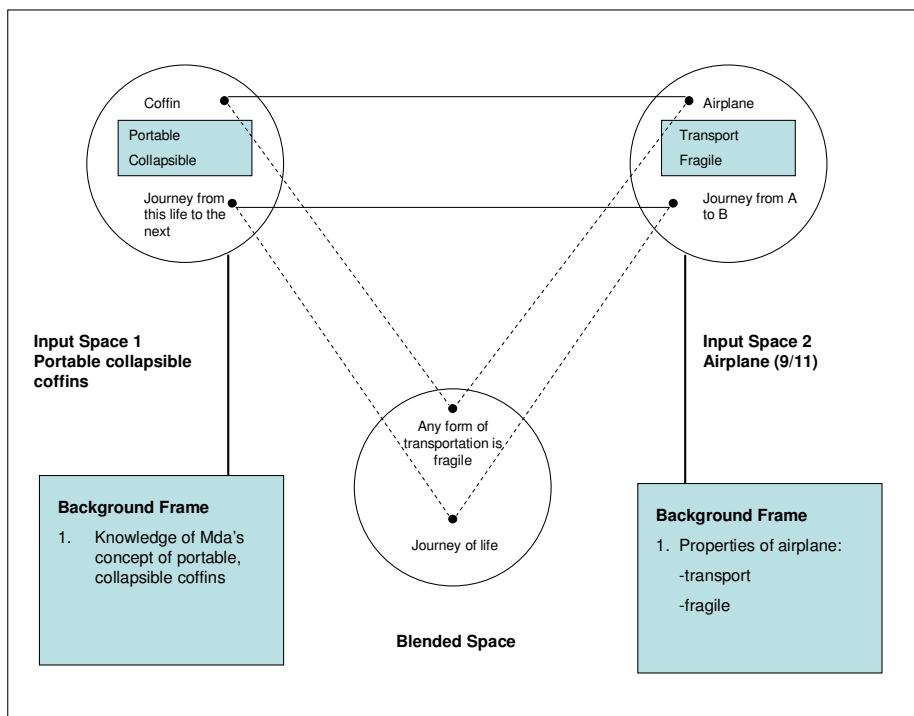

Figure 3. The portable collapsible coffins network.

In the blend, we understand that any form of transportation (the idea of *portable*) that takes people on a journey from point A to B is fragile (can *collapse*) and that this journey is representative of the journey of life. Thus, any person using any form of transport on any given day (on the journey of life) to travel from point A to B, may find himself/herself in a coffin that represents the

journey from this life to the afterlife if the transportation *collapses* in any way. The emergent structure in this blend reveals the idea that the coffin and the airplane do not only share properties, but an airplane (or any other form of transportation) may actually become one's coffin. The network looks like Figure 3.

6.1.3. The Richburg/Maluleke conceptual blending network

This intertextual reference works slightly different than the previous two as it is not based on Analogy and Identity, but on Analogy and Disanalogy. Maluleke uses text from Richburg's book as a framework (Analogy) for his own interpretation by carefully replacing certain words and phrases in Text A (from *Out of America*) with his own words and phrases in Text B (Disanalogy). These two passages are quoted directly from Maluleke's article though I have placed them alongside each other and highlighted the parallel sections for easy reference. The two texts read as follows with the substituted words and phrases in red:

Text A (Richburg)	**Text B (Maluleke)**
I open the little plastic bag with my headset and plug the earphones into the armrest in time for the start of the BBC news just coming across the television screen in front of the cabin. The story is about Rwanda; something about a new outbreak of violence at the border and worries about fresh incursions from Hutu rebels based over the border of Zaire who are plotting their return. I close my eyes and switch channels to a music station. I'm leaving Africa now, so I don't care any more about the turmoil in Rwanda and have no interest in this latest tragic development. I have seen it all before, and I'm sure I'll see it again. But from now on, I will see it from afar, maybe watching it on television, like millions of other Americans. I'll watch the latest footage of refugees crossing a border some place, soldiers looting,	I open the little plastic bag with my headset and plug the earphones into the armrest in time for the start of the CNN news just coming across the television screen in front of the cabin. The story is about September 11th; something about a new outbreak of anthrax in Philadelphia and worries about another plane hijack in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina. I close my eyes and switch channels to a music station. I'm leaving the USA now, so I don't care any more about the turmoil in the USA and have no interest in this latest tragic development. I have seen it all before, and I'm sure I'll see it again. But from now on, I will see it from afar, maybe watching it on television, like millions of other Africans. I'll watch the latest footage of Americans with bloated stomachs and charred lips after

kids with grenade launchers blasting apart yet another quaint but rundown African capital. I will watch with more than passing interest, since I have been here. I will understand now the complexities behind the conflicts. I will also know that the problems are too intractable, that the outside world can do nothing, until Africa is ready to save itself. I'll also know that none of it affects me, because I feel no attachment to the place or the people. And why should I feel anything more? Because my skin is black? Because some ancestor of mine, four centuries ago, was wrenched from this place and sent to America, and because I now look like those others whose ancestors were left behind? Does that make me still a part of this place? Should their suffering now somehow still be mine?	another chemical warfare attack by unknown terrorists. I will watch, on TV, in the comfort of my middle-class home in Pretoria's elite suburb of Centurion, as fire fighters tear limbs off rotting bodies of crushed Americans as they desperately try to account for the dead after yet another terrorist attack on yet another doomed American city. Sure, I will watch with more than passing interest, since I have been here. I will understand now the complexities behind the conflicts. I will also know that the problems are too intractable, that the outside world can do nothing, until the USA is ready to save itself. I'll also know that none of it affects me, because I feel no attachment to the place or the people. And why should I feel anything more? Because I am a human being? Because some ancestor of mine, several million years ago gave birth to other ancestors of mine that might have given birth to Americans and that now I look like some Americans? Does that make me still a part of this place? Should their suffering now somehow still be mine?

In this conceptual blending network, the elements from Richburg's text will form Input Space 1 and the substituted phrases from Maluleke's article will form Input Space 2. Input Space 1 thus constitutes Richburg's text from *Out of America* and the background frame for this input space is our knowledge of violence on the African continent and specifically the Rwanda genocide. The idea (according to Maluleke) of the Western world's ignorance of this violence in Africa is thus a part of our long-term schematic knowledge that is activated when reading Richburg's text. Input Space 2 then represents Maluleke's reworking of Richburg's text and our knowledge of 9/11 and the consequences thereof form the background frame. There are two Vital Relations in this blend, namely Analogy and Disanalogy. There is interplay between these two Vital Relations so that the basic frameworks of the two texts stand as an Analogy, whereas the words and phrases that are replaced work as Disanalogy.
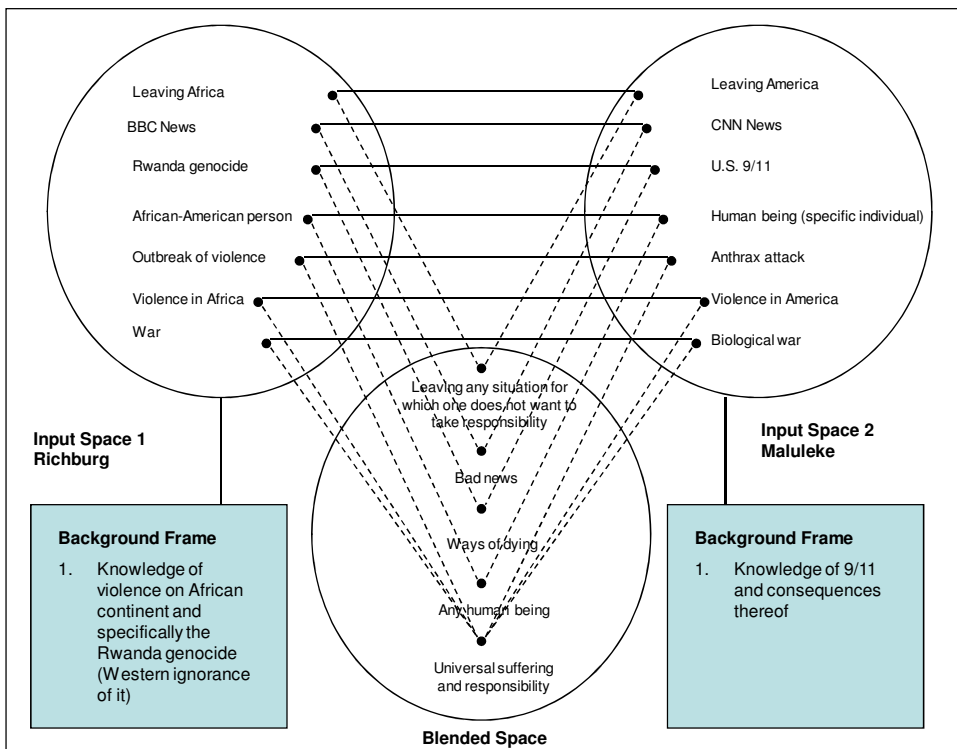
Figure 4. The Richburg/Maluleke network.

In the blended space, these texts are not only understood as parallel texts, as mentioned earlier, but the idea of leaving Africa/America is also understood as leaving any situation for which one does not want to take responsibility, the BBC/CNN news represents any bad news, the Rwanda/9 September (9/11) analogy/disanalogy is equated with ways of dying (already a blend as represented in Figure 3), the African-American/human being (specific human being here, namely the author) allusion is understood as any human being (non-specific) and the outbreak of violence in Africa (war)/outbreak of anthrax in America (chemical war) is understood in terms of universal suffering and responsibility. The Disanalogy in every instance can only be understood in terms of the Analogy that is set up between the text and the intertext(s) during elaboration which enables us to imaginatively connect the ideas presented in these texts so as to construct meaning from them. All the previous blends also rely on Analogy/Disanalogy (even though the main Vital Relations are Analogy based on Identity relations) as all intertexts are used, sighted, or alluded to for the specific purpose of setting up an analogous (Analogy) text which can then be used to highlight the Disanalogy between them. It would seem from this that Analogy and Disanalogy are the most important Vital Relations in intertextual readings as they are intrinsic to any text/intertext construction. The emergent structure reveals that Maluleke is using Richburg's text to set up a contextual reference which he uses to address the universal, catholic suffering and

responsibility of all human beings. This *catholic contextuality* is referred to in Maluleke's title. The network is represented in Figure 4.

6.1.4. The national anthems conceptual blending network and the parable conceptual blending network

Two conceptual blending networks arise from the two national anthems mentioned in Maluleke's article, namely the unofficial *God Bless America* and the official *God Bless Africa*. The two national anthems are presented below:

God Bless America	**God Bless Africa**
God Bless America	God bless Africa
While the storm clouds gather far across the sea	Lord bless Africa
Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free	May her spirit rise up high
Let us all be grateful for a land so fair	Hear thou our prayers
As we raise our voices in solemn prayer:	Lord bless us your children
God bless America	Descend, Oh Spirit. Descend, Oh Holy Spirit.
Land that I love	Lord bless us your children
Stand beside her and guide her	Lord bless us your peoples
Through the night with a light from above	Put an end to wars and suffering
From the mountains, to the prairies	Oh Lord, do bless our peoples
To the oceans, white with foam	
God bless America	
My sweet home	

Maluleke uses these two anthems in an analogous way to emphasise what he calls the 'globalisation of misery' and to reveal what he experiences as the different views and expectations of the U.S. and Africa. Maluleke, a theologian, seems to base these two prayer-songs on a parable of the Pharisee's prayer and the tax collector's prayer in the Bible in Luke (Luke 18.9-14) and a similar reference in Matthew (Matthew 6.5-15) where Jesus talks about our attitude towards prayer. Though there is no explicit reference to the parable, as with the intertexts cited earlier, evidence (this is my subjective interpretation of his text) in the article is contained in the following lines: "During times of despair, I have wondered if Americans would fare better than Africans in their prayerful request before God. Do they sing it like people who are used to being blessed by God – or do they sing it because, as Africans sing their song, they often feel abandoned and forgotten by God?"

The idea of a competition that we encountered before comes into play here again. This time it concerns God's approval and blessing, or who is heard by God. Maluleke seems to be comparing the unofficial American national anthem to the prayer of the Pharisee in the parable and the official African national anthem to the prayer of the tax collector. Like the Pharisee, Americans pray like people who expect to be blessed by God whereas Africans, like the tax collector, offer a humble prayer. It is unclear from the text alone whether Maluleke intended this analogy or whether it was done subconsciously or not meant in this way at all and is therefore solely my interpretation of what he is saying. These conceptual blending networks are thus not revealing universal truths but they do reveal how subjective our interpretations are and how our knowledge of certain conceptual frames such as religious frames, whether conscious or subconscious, may influence our construction of meaning.

Two blends arise from the national anthems with the first serving as a type of megablend, i.e. a conceptual blending network that contains another blend implicitly or explicitly (implicitly in this case). In the megablend, the two national anthems are compared only in terms of its linguistic structure whereas the second blend looks at the national anthems in terms of the parable sited earlier and according to my own reading and understanding of the text, thus adding another layer to the meaning-making process. Input Space 1contains our knowledge and understanding of *God Bless America*. The background frame for this input space relies on our knowledge of the politics and (unofficial) anthem of America (the U.S.) who, according to Maluleke, enjoys monopoly on world politics and sympathy. Background knowledge of the parable cited earlier is not essential, but will influence the reader's understanding of Maluleke's article. An awareness, or the lack thereof, of the subtle parallel drawn by Maluleke between America's prayer (anthem) and the Pharisee's prayer (which is not pleasing to God) will influence the reader's construction of meaning. Input Space 2 contains our knowledge and understanding of *God Bless Africa*. The background frame for this input space constitutes our knowledge of the politics (particularly the wars and genocides) and the anthem of Africa (South Africa and some other African countries). Again, knowledge of the parable and the parallels between Africa's prayer and the tax collector's prayer (which is acceptable and pleasing to God) will influence the reader's meaning construction. There are two Vital Relations in this blend, namely Analogy and Disanalogy. There is an interplay between these two Vital Relations (in the same way as in the previous conceptual blending network) so that the basic frameworks of the two texts work as Analogy (both are prayer-songs), but the differences in attitude explained by Maluleke work as Disanalogy.

In the blended space, these texts are not only understood as prayer-songs and national anthems of two different countries (and continents), but also as a universal prayer for God's blessing on humanity. It is understood that God loves His people and blesses them, and that in His eyes we are not different nations, but are regarded in the same way (we are *one*) and stand before him

equally. The *American Dream* is not replaced by the *African Dream* but by *God's Dream* which is the same for all of humanity. Thus, in this context, the idea that *being American is equivalent to first prize* (as presented by Maluleke and my understanding of what he is saying) is dispelled in this conceptual blending network. Also embedded in the blend is the implicit intertext of the parable which carries with it a strong sense that God honours and listens to the humble prayer, which in this case is the African prayer, not the American prayer as suggested by Maluleke. The emergent structure reveals that Maluleke refers to the two national anthems to show not only that the *American Dream* has faltered and that America stands before God as a *proud* (not humble) nation, but also that in the bigger scheme of things (or in God's eyes), no single nation is better than another. His *dream* is the same for all nations. In his article, Maluleke writes: "Thus the most profound song that both Americans and South Africans can sing is 'God Bless Humanity and All of Creation!' Unless we all can sing such a song over and above our own anthems – official and unofficial – then we are not yet ready … for the practice of genuine catholicity and genuine contextuality."

The idea put forward at the beginning of Maluleke's article that the *American Dream* is the best dream for all nations is further dispelled by knowledge of the embedded blend. This will be discussed when we look at the embedded blend. The network of the megablend is represented as follows:
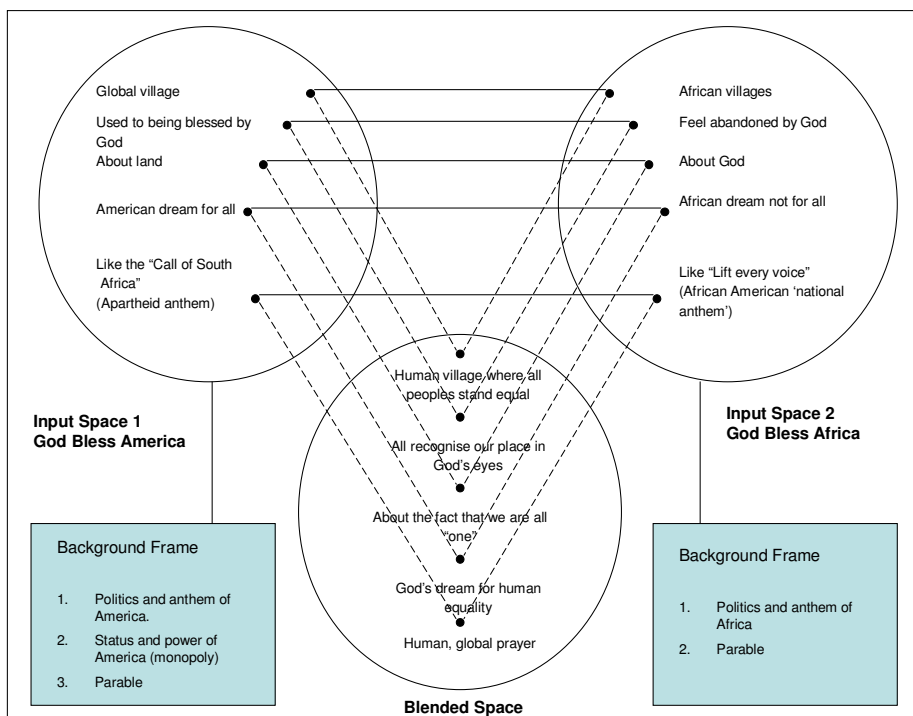

Figure 5. The national anthems network.

Inherent in the megablend is the blend of the parable. Knowledge of this parable will influence the meaning-making process of the reader. Input Space 1 represents the two national anthems. The background frame for this input space constitutes our knowledge of the tone of the two national anthems. In other words, the fact that (based on Maluleke's article quoted above) Americans pray as a nation used to being blessed by God, whereas Africans pray as a nation pleading for God's mercy. Input Space 2 represents the parable of the two prayers and the background frame for this input space constitutes our knowledge of the status of Pharisees and tax collectors during biblical times. Pharisees were the learned preachers of the day and enjoyed high status. They attained holiness by keeping the law. The tax collectors, on the other hand, were regarded as *unholy*. Other important background knowledge relates to what Jesus said in Matthew (6.5-15). This emphasises the idea that God blesses the humble and that America is not favoured by Him above other nations. The most obvious Vital Relation is that of Identity. Americans are given the *identity* of the Pharisees, and Africans are given the *identity* of tax collectors. Property also comes into play here. Pharisees have certain *properties* (e.g. they are proud) which then becomes a *property* of Americans. The same goes for Africans and tax collectors in terms of humility. Note, however, that Analogy/Disanalogy also plays a role in this network with regards to the text/intertext construction. That is, the identities and properties of Americans and Africans are analogous to the identities and properties of Pharisees and tax collectors respectively, while the identities and properties of Americans and Africans are disanalogous to each other, in the same way that the identities and properties of Pharisees and tax collectors are disanalogous.
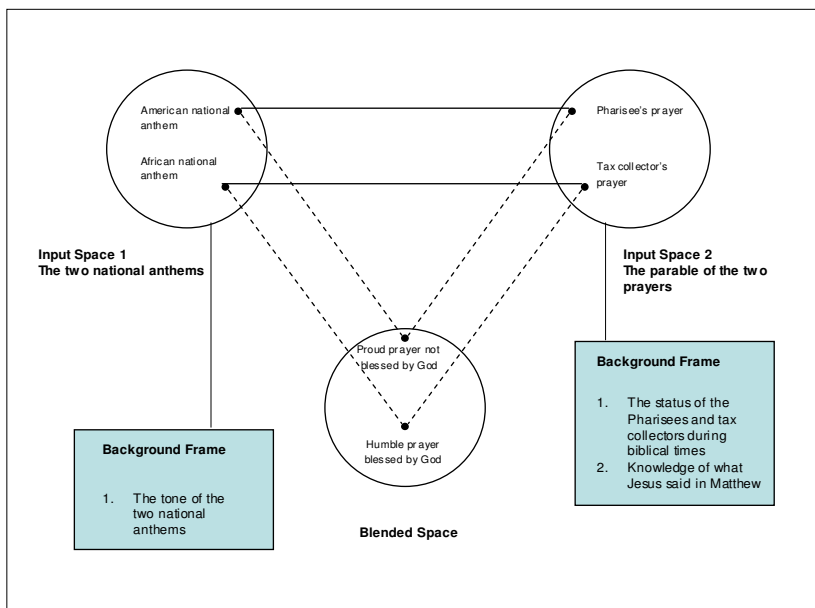

Figure 6. The parable network.

In the blended space, it is understood that the American prayer is equated to the Pharisee's prayer which was unacceptable to God. The African prayer, which is a humble prayer like the tax collector's prayer, is accepted by God and pleases Him. Once again, we are able to construct meaning in this way through the process of elaboration. The emergent structure reveals that even though America has high status compared to Africa, which is seen as a poor and *unholy* continent, God does not favour America as the best and most progressive nation (as the rest of the world might in Maluleke's opinion), but also listens to the humble requests of Africans. The network is represented in Figure 6.

7. Conclusions

Cognitive studies, and specifically cognitive linguistic studies, can and have made a number of contributions to the discipline of Theology in a scientific way. There are studies dealing with ritual in religion, the conceptualisation of non-natural entities and conceptual metaphor such as 'Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible', edited by Pierre van Hecke [22]. These studies have contributed to our understanding of the way in which we are able to construct and interpret religious and theological frames. Applying the framework of conceptual blending to intertextuality in theological texts further reveals that [7, p. 76]:

- Intertextuality (at least in theological texts) is, in fact, underpinned by conceptual blending.
- Meaning is highly contextual and the meaning-making process is influenced and structured by both conscious and unconscious knowledge as was shown especially in the Parable Conceptual Blending Network.
- The Vital Relations identified as Analogy and Disanalogy are integral to the intertextual texts in this paper, as all the text/intertext constructions rely on the interplay between Analogy and Disanalogy. Analogy pertains to the frameworks of the texts and intertexts, while Disanalogy pertains to the content as can be seen most clearly in *The Richburg/Maluleke Network*, but is also perceptible in the other conceptual blending networks.
- Our world knowledge, which includes religious frames, seems to have at least some influence on our construction of meaning and therefore our conceptualisation of the world.

In conclusion, the conceptual blending networks in this paper reveal that conceptual integration underpins our ability to interpret intertexts and shows the multiple meanings inherent in these text/intertext constructions. The creativity of individuals (both writers and readers) is also illustrated and the meaning-making process intrinsic to intertextuality is shown to be reliant on conceptual structures and processes rather than purely linguistic structures and processes. This study, which forms part of a larger study on intertextuality, further reveals that intertextuality is not merely a literary phenomenon, but a cognitive phenomenon, i.e. we think intertextually. In other words, our physical and socio-cultural knowledge and experiences also form a type of intertext that may be conscious or unconscious knowledge at specific times, but nonetheless influences the

meaning we construct from texts or events in everyday life. Part of this socio-cultural knowledge, is our knowledge of religious and/or theological ideologies and concepts which constitute a type of conceptual framework that seems, from this study, to have at least some influence on the way in which we conceptualise our reality though I am still researching how and to what extent conceptual frameworks such as religious frameworks might inform our conceptual organisation.

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