

INTERMINABLE VIRGINS IN A RUSTING COUNTRY? THE PORTRAYAL OF THE COVID-19 PERIOD IN THE SONGS *WE WILL DANCE AGAIN* BY MATTHEW TEMBO AND *DZUWA* BY SLAP DEE

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Abstract

This article examined two songs: We Will Dance Again by Matthew Tembo and Dzuwa by Slap Dee to explain the experience of Zambians to COVID-19. Through the theory of the conceptual metaphor, the study examined the metaphorical nature of the songs and identified a reliance on the symbolic role of the sun and how the sun is both a subject of God and a god itself. The study shows that while both songs rely on the metaphor to share hope and despair during COVID-19, We Will Dance Again has a positive futuristic outlook, while Dzuwa is more resigned to the situation.

Keywords: Conceptual Metaphor, Poetry, COVID-19, Quarantine, Song, Music

Introduction

Poetry deals with man's deepest concerns. Issues that affect man and contribute to his daily life are constantly explored through poetry. This is because poetry uses compressed language and phraseology to express feelings of joy, love, anger, hurt and suffering (Mtonga, 2008). This article is concerned with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in two songs namely; *We Will Dance Again* by Matthew Tembo and *Dzuwa* by Slap Dee which are considered poetry. The thrust of the discussion is on how metaphorical language has been used by the musicians to express their fears and expectations, and to explore ways of looking forward despite challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fully aware that poetry addresses key issues, it is necessary to point out, as Mtonga (2008) has argued above, that there is special usage of language in poetry. The use of compressed language achieved through the metaphor, simile, personification, the conceit and apostrophe among others is the bedrock of poetry. These figures of speech are central to imagery in poetry. They play the role of the symbol as they not only illuminate the issues that concern the subjects but also extend the meaning of the text. It is important to also note that these symbols operate at various and mostly, private level even if in certain cases, they can be public. For this reason, this article considers how figurative language plays a symbolic role in poetry in general and the poetry of COVID-19 in particular.

Through semiotics, it becomes apparent that generally, all language is a symbol. This emanates from the fact that a symbol is something that represents another on a different level. Language operates in a similar fashion as all words are symbols of actions, concepts, objects and

people among others. This article is guided by the theory of the conceptual metaphor to examine the language of two selected Zambian songs that deal with despair associated with COVID-19. The article will discuss the use of the metaphor before exploring the situational context of the songs considering that they are associated with COVID-19. Finally, the use of the metaphor in '*We Will Dance Again*' by Mathew Tembo and '*Dzuwa*' by Slap Dee will be examined and a conclusion will be drawn based on the discussion.

The Conceptual Metaphor

Metaphors are used in discourses at many levels including public discourse (Musolff, 2016). The metaphor is used in many instances and its prominence in public discourses and literacy texts is evident. This makes it one of the most important rhetorical devices (Musolff, 2012). It is probably coming from this importance of the metaphor as a rhetorical device that the theory of the conceptual metaphor developed. The theory suggests that one's understanding of the world is highly shaped through their constant interaction with metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) note that even though the metaphor is a poetic element and primarily a language-based product, its actualisation permeates human experience at many different levels and is realised in almost all daily activities. The authors note that the principle of the metaphor is enabling the subject to experience or understand one kind of thing or even experience from the perspective of experience of another. The metaphor, therefore, expands one's view of the world as it transcends direct experience and reinforces one's interaction with the world. Understanding of complex terms or concepts is best done by metaphorising them into basic and easy to understand phenomena (Forceville and Paling, 2018).

Vervaeke and Kennedy (1996) note that most of our key ideas and interpretations about life are guided by metaphors. From our understanding of politics through imagination itself to morality and sex, among others, everything is shared through metaphors. Consequently, one would not understand any of these concepts without an understanding of the metaphors associated with them. This further shows that the metaphor occupies a very large part of our psyche and there is need to pay particular attention to how it is created, employed, received and ultimately, how it affects the whole corpus of communication in order for communication to be better understood.

As much as it is proposed above that metaphors should be examined in relation to how they affect the communication process for the effectiveness of communication, it is important to note that metaphors, in fact, shape the behaviour of human beings. According to Ritchie (2003), metaphors influence how people think in two ways: firstly, if an idea at hand is shrouded in certain metaphors, it is difficult to discuss a contrary idea without creating new metaphors, and, secondly, the understanding of any concept that has metaphorical underpinnings requires that the metaphor be interpreted in relation to the context. As a result, one would be able to choose one metaphor over the other such as 'Life is a Journey as opposed to Life is a Disaster'. For example, while discussing death at sea, one would say that water is death, while in another context water will be equated to life. Metaphors are, in this case, highly shaped by the context, while they also shape the

recipient of the metaphor to understand that the context is key to not only appreciating but also creating new metaphors.

It is also important to note that just as metaphors seem to transcend borders in terms of how they are appreciated as both a language and conceptual product, some specific metaphors even transcend culture in how they are interpreted. Specific metaphors that use words such as head, leader, see or understanding among others, can also be interpreted across cultures to mean the same thing. This is because, although cultures are generally different, human bodies are similar.

Culture does not change biological creation; instead, it responds to biological rules. Therefore, 'the leg of the table' will be understood by everyone just as 'the head of the truck' or 'the head of the school' will be universally understood (Vervaeke and Kennedy, 2004). This can further be qualified by the concept of the collective unconscious, which leads to archetypes. Jung argues that man has inherited various aspects of his reality from his ancestors that he employs in a specifically human manner. This inherited information is what appears in all human spheres and is found operating in a similar manner in societies that have not had contact before. It is this similarity that Jung calls the collective unconscious (Sieff, 2019). The collective unconscious further explains the existence of universal metaphors, which come from society's collective response to reality through inheritance of human experiences.

As it was pointed out at the beginning, the metaphor is a poetic element and a language product. This means that it has a special place in linguistics and literature. Students of literature encounter metaphors in the literary works as much as students of language will encounter them in social interactions and conversational spaces. However, the conceptual metaphor in the literary works shows how the author understands the world. It also shows the style employed by an author and ultimately, shows how an author thinks. It shows the features of an author's thought as exhibited in the metaphors selected in the said works (Qodirova, 2022).

Based on the above discussion, it can be argued that the conceptual metaphor shows that the metaphor is as important in people's daily lives as it is important in language and literary use. It shows that the thinking process, interpretation of the world and actions taken by individuals are highly influenced by the metaphors in their environment.

The Metaphor in Music and COVID-19

Just as music is an aspect of life like any other which this study has already argued to be a subject of the metaphor, it should be noted from the onset that music can be studied as a literary work by focusing on the lyrics. Finnegan (1977) has pointed out that poetry occurs in sung form in many instances. She has also shown that oral poetry takes various forms that include: the epic, the ballad, the panegyric ode and the lyric. Since these poems are presented in song form, it follows that sung forms can also be examined as poems. For example, Khondowe (2020) carried out a literary study of *Cinamwali* songs. Similarly, Moyo (2014) has done studies on a song, JOB's *Hallelujah* and has made reference to a song in a study of poetry (Moyo, 2014). The use of songs as literary elements in the studies listed above has led to this study that is specifically on songs. The current study, therefore, argues that songs qualify to be regarded as literary texts because the above studies

have regarded them as such. Khondowe (2020) has gone further to argue that the study of songs as literary text should not be limited to the lyrics but should go further to include associated performance elements such as intonation, actions and gestures among others as all these contribute to the interpretation and understanding of the songs. This study agrees with Khondowe's argument that literature should not be restricted to language alone but to all elements including objects that contribute to the understanding of the language at hand. The function of the song, should, therefore, be seen to be broad. For instance, Finnegan (2012) makes reference to the Nyattiti singer and points out that his function and the function of his art includes to lament, to praise, to recount personal experiences, to exalt and to comment on current affairs. This implies that poetry has the function that goes beyond artistic satisfaction but also social response. This study will pay attention to studies that have discussed the metaphor in music.

Through the use of the metaphor, musicians have been able to explore and show sickness. As Wood (2011) highlights, music shows sickness through the use of the metaphor or metaphorical language. This indicates that to show a sick situation, musicians attempt to borrow from the forcefulness of metaphorical language and this force creates a vivid imagery of the situation. It is easy to use music to deal with these dire situations because, as Zbikowski (2008) argues, music plays a key role of manipulating emotions of others. Therefore, when one wants to manipulate people's emotions, it is important to use music. This is in line with Mtonga's (2008) argument that poetry expresses emotions and other deep concerns that man has. It is at this point that one realises the key relationship between poetry and music that they both appeal to emotion and attempt to affect the emotion of the audience. This quality of poetry and music, a combination seen in the song, is central to dealing with COVID-19, which is a serious issue.

The COVID-19 situation had a fundamental impact on the lives of people world over. For instance, schools closed, and businesses wound up which led to anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorders (Asante et al., 2020; Nyashanu et al., 2020; Kim et al., n.d.; and Semo and Frissa, 2020). These changes that took place meant a state of depression in society. Therefore, that music came in to deal with the state of depression which, according to Forceville and Paling (2018), requires metaphors to express. The metaphors, it has already been observed, are expressed in everyday speech but also heavily in poetry and music. Bolstein notes that music is the craft that plays the role of rescue of a people as it helps individuals get relief from distress. It can be argued in this case, that music is intended to contribute to shaping people's emotions to make their lives better by creating for them a stress-free environment when they interact with the music. Music is meant to create for people a time when they can enjoy their lives. When music does not do this or does the opposite, it fails on its social role of helping society heal, especially in times of distress. Based on this, it can be argued that dirges comfort the bereaved, epics encourage patriotism, and lyrics share latest occurrences and opinions.

Metaphorical Language in COVID-19 Zambian Songs

The songs in this section have been selected because they are associated with the COVID-19 situation. The songs have a COVID-19 milieu and even without the explicit mention of the name

COVID-19, they are identified as discussing the issue. Before the songs were chosen, a post was shared through social media asking the general public to lead the authors to songs on COVID-19. The two songs under discussion were identified ultimately. Before the songs were finally settled for, the authors searched for other Zambian songs dealing with the subject but were unable to find any. It was at this point that it was resolved that the two songs discussed below would be the subject texts for this study.

Metaphorical Language in ‘We Will Dance Again’ by Mathew Tembo

Before going into the discussion, lyrics of the song are provided below to enable the reader to follow the discussion.

Ndakumbuka nthawi zakale ine eh eh (I have remembered past times)
Oh, nthawi zakale (oh, past times)
Timapita ucheza kokondeka athu (We used to visit our loved ones)
Oh, nthawi zakale (oh, past times)
Ukhala pamodzi (Living together)
Udyela pamodzi, sangalala (Eating together, having fun)
Nthawi zakale (Past times)

Lero akuti sizitheka izi (Nowadays, they say that this is not possible)

Panja apo pali chilombo (Out there, there’s a beast)
Panja apo pali chilombo (Out there, there’s a beast)
Lero tonse ndise anamwali (Today, we are all virgins in seclusion)
Kungokhala munyumba basi (Staying indoors only)

I meditate
I pray
I meditate
I pray
When, when, when, will I see you again
Kuli chilombo (There’s a beast)
’Said I pray, pray, pray
You and I, will have a little dance again

Big cloud descending over we
Kuli chilombo (There’s a beast)

Abale ndi anzanga naasowa (I miss my family and friends)
Ine kuno kumawa latuluka dzuwa (Here in the east, the sun has risen)
Zinzi uko kumpoto lalowa dzuwa (There in the West where Zinzi is, the sun has set)
I meditate
I pray
I meditate
I pray

When, when, when, will I see you again
Kuli chilombo (There's a beast)
'Said I pray, pray, pray

You and I, will have a little dance again
You and I, will have a little dance again

When, when, when, will I see you again
Kuli chilombo (There's a beast)
'Said I pray, pray, pray
You and I will have a little dance again
We will dance again

We Will Dance Again starts with creating a stark contrast between the past and the present. The speaker states that when he recalls the past, he is reminded of the times that families sat and ate together. This is evident when the speaker states:

Ndakumbuka nthawi zakale ine eh eh (I have remembered past times)
Oh, nthawi zakale (oh, past times)
Timapita ucheza kokondeka athu (We used to visit our loved ones)
Oh, nthawi zakale (oh, past times)
Ukhala pamodzi (Living together)
Udyela pamodzi, sangalala (Eating together, having fun)
Nthawi zakale (Past times)

The meal in African culture does not only symbolise nutritional value or merely filling the belly but also communal solidarity. The speaker in the song shows that meeting of families and friends was representative of a happy people; a merry people. For instance, one notices in *Things Fall Apart* (1959/1994) that having a feast together is not meant to save people from starvation but because it is good to commune together. He further argues that when people gather in the moonlit village, it is not because of the moon as everyone can see it in their compound. His argument is that people come together and eat together because it is good for family and friends to do so.

The case shown above suggests that eating is a symbol of communality as it shows that people are healthy and in contact with others. It shows that people have chosen to invite others whenever there is enjoyment because even if they had enjoyment, the enjoyment would be inadequate in the confines of one's own space. There is need for people to enjoy together. It can be suggested that *We Will Dance Again* and *Things Fall Apart* both strive to give the meaning of community to food. As observed earlier, in the past, according to *We Will Dance Again*, people visited each other, ate and made merry.

A contrast is created with the laying side by side of the past with the present, which is introduced with *lelo akuti sizitheka izi* (today, they say that this is not possible) in reference to visiting each other, living and eating together and making merry. And upon showing that the lifestyle of communality has been shattered, *We Will Dance Again* says that there is a beast outside.

Please note that *chilombo*, which refers to COVID-19 in this song, is translated as wild animal or a beast. The use of *chilombo* in reference to COVID-19 suggests that humanity is under siege by the beast. Human beings have locked themselves up in their homes for fear of being devoured by the beast.

Later, a world turned upside down is seen, as the song says that a big cloud is descending over the community. For instance, the construction of the verse itself is grammatically wrong: ‘big cloud, descending over we.’ There is no article at the beginning of the verse, and the verse ends with a subject pronoun as opposed to an object one. One would essentially expect the verse to be ‘a big cloud is descending over us’, but the speaker chooses to use ‘big cloud descending over we’ even when the ‘we’ does not have any special stylistic purposes such as rhyme, assonance or alliteration among others. This suggests that there is a deeper meaning of this construction. From what has been shown so far, it is possible to say that the use of such a construction is motivated by the world, including language, falling apart. It is a sign of the collapse of what was holding society together hence, the repeated line, ‘will I see you again?’ The line suggests not only loneliness but also despair.

At the same time, the big cloud descending over the community further suggests that the community has been blocked from access to the sun. What is interesting is that within the same stanza where the big cloud is descending on the community, the speaker states that the sun has risen in this part of the world, while in another part of the world, the sun has set. This image of the setting sun is very interesting because in the place where the sun has risen, it has been blocked by a big cloud, while in the other part of the world, the sun has set. The world, it appears at this point, is dark and there is no presence of the sun. This further means that the world is dark and signs of life are slim. This emphasises the despair observed above and further creates a horrifying experience when *kuli chilombo* (there is a beast) is heard every now and then. It is dark through and through and there is a beast outside. Therefore, no one can go out to interact with others; hence, the lyrics, ‘when will I see you again?’

The image of the setting sun also shows split families in the sense that although, as it has been observed above, experiences are similar in different parts of the world, it is clear that families and friends have been separated. This is seen not only through the contrast between the past and present but also through mentioning a specific character.

Abale ndi anzanga naasowa (I miss my family and friends)

Ine kuno kumawa latuluka dzuwa (Here in the east, the sun has risen)

Zinzi uko kumpoto lalowa dzuwa (There in the West where Zinzi is, the sun has set)

Zinzi is Mathew Tembo’s daughter. The speaker suggests that the world in which Zinzi lives is dark probably because of the absence of the father. Even if both are away from each other, it is sad for the speaker because the daughter is away from the father. The absence of the father in the daughter’s life suggests that the daughter’s life is in an undesirable state. It is because of this that further the absence of the father figure is also shared alongside the absence of the sun. The sun, the centre of the universe, with all its creative, regeneration and life-giving energies has

disappeared from the face of the earth and has plunged the earth and humanity in a cold and dark void leaving humanity at the lowest point that can ever be imagined.

Further, one sees the splitting of the father and daughter to symbolise the detachment between the older and younger generations. The old, that has desirable qualities, has been detached from the present. The young are left to fend for themselves, while the old cannot do anything to help them. The chasm or abyss between the generations, societies and lives leads to despair. The only thing that can easily be done at this point is pray for a better time. Through repeated focus on prayer, the speaker seems to expect better results:

I meditate

I pray

The speaker has gone further to suggest that everyone has become a virgin who has just come of age. This is based on the *cinamwali* culture of the Chewa people of Eastern Zambia. Here, when a girl comes of age, she is secluded for a specific period of time, a time when she is taught various life lessons before being released to meet the rest of the community as an adult member of society, (Chikuta et al., 2006). The song is also in Chewa and this shows that the Chewa worldview plays a major role in creating meaning in this song. The song, at this point, attempts to suggest that the experience that the world is going through is a passing phase and after some time, humanity will come out of the dark with energy to face the new world. Humanity will learn important lessons and the lessons will usher them into the world as a new people. As much as there is a beast outside, the people will come out with invaluable lessons and will become people.

It is possible, based on the above interpretation, to suggest that when human beings come out of the seclusion period, they will appreciate their humanity even better. The nostalgia that the song starts with is likely to be turned back into reality as the speaker continuously meditates and prays that humanity will come out and dance again. Therefore, just as the virgin in seclusion looks forward to coming out of seclusion and triumphantly dance with the community at graduation, humanity in *We Will Dance Again* will also dance again at the time when the world opens up. This further shows why the last lines of the song are:

You and I, will have little dance again

You and I will have a little dance again

The state of being virgins in seclusion is not going to last forever. While the song opens on a gloomy side, its ending shows a positive outlook on life even if that has not yet happened. The speaker seems to suggest that even if there is darkness throughout, it is hope that will keep people sane during the dark times and once the darkness is over, people will be happy that they went through that particular experience, which has made them better human beings.

Say I pray, pray, pray

You and I will have a little dance again

We will dance again

Metaphorical Language in ‘Dzuwa’ by Slap Dee

As was the case with the discussion on Mathew Tembo’s *We Will Dance Again*, the discussion of Slap Dee’s *Dzuwa* will be preceded by a presentation of the lyrics of the song.

Dzuwa (The sun)

Ambuye chotsani dzuwa (God, release the sun)

Dziko langenewa nguwe (The world has rusted)

Tazunzika kopanda dzuwa (We have suffered without the sun)

Oh oh dzuwa (oh, oh, the sun)

Ambuye tidalitseni ndi dzuwa (God, bless us with the sun)

Dziko lichita nga yangenewa ndi ululu (The world seems to have been poisoned)

Tiyamika mweo apo pampano (We praise you, up there on that seat)

Dzuwa, dzuwa, dzuwa (The sun, the sun, the sun)

Ambuye chotsani dzuwa (God, release the sun)

Dziko langenewa nguwe (The world has rusted)

Tazunzika kopanda dzuwa (We have suffered without the sun)

Oh oh dzuwa (oh, oh, the sun)

Ambuye tidalitseni ndi dzuwa (God, bless us with the sun)

Dziko lichita nga yangenewa ndi ululu (The world seems to have been poisoned)

Tiyamika mweo apo pampano (We praise you, up there on that seat)

Dzuwa, dzuwa, dzuwa (The sun, the sun, the sun)

Takana kubiliva ndise tili na minyama (We have refused to believe that we are the unlucky ones)

Navenzomveka mushe vinaleka nakuwama (All that used to be tasty lacks a pleasant taste)

Tinalakhwila ndani? (Who did we offend?)

Mutikambileko ‘sorry’ (Say ‘sorry’ on our behalf)

Mayeso yatikonkha bad (Trials have followed us badly)

Yizibika story (The whole story is known)

First yenze cholera (Initially, it was cholera)

Kwabwela load shedding (Then came load shedding)

Before na ma corona (Before COVID)

Tenze busy na ma gassing (We had gassing problems)

Tayambo payana tekha-tekha (We started killing each other)

It’s so disgusting

Na ma busa (Even pastors)

Balema navo vama fasting (Are tired of fasting)

Kuhood kwanga ba guy bafuna che ka certain (In my neighbourhood, someone wants something)

Bavale che pamala naka nsima ndiye curtain (To fill the belly with nsima, that’s a curtain)

Sibafuna na vambili umoyo che ni daliso (They don’t want a lot; life only is a blessing)

Ambuye abwezepo nga mochila wamalinso (May the load give back like the tail of a lizard)

How did we get here?

Nalema kuzifunsa (I am tired of asking myself)

Kapena ni udalo sininasilize pa UNZA (Maybe I am dull as I did not complete my studies at UNZA)

Agogo bananiuza uzakula mwana chipuba (My grandparent told me that i would turn out a foolish child)

Vikakuvuta langa kumwamba upemphe zuba (When things becomes hard, look up and ask (for) the sun)

Dzuwa (The sun)

Ambuye chotsani dzuwa (God, release the sun)

Dziko langenewa nguwe (The world has rusted)

Tazunzika kopanda dzuwa (We have suffered without the sun)

Oh oh dzuwa (oh, oh, the sun)

Ambuye tidalitseni ndi dzuwa (God, bless us with the sun)

Dziko lichita nga yangenewa ndi ululu (The world seems to have been poisoned)

Tiyamika mweo apo pampando (We praise you, up there on that seat)

Dzuwa, dzuwa, dzuwa (The sun, the sun, the sun)

Nauka mutu uzunguluka (I woke up feeling like my heard is turning)

Monga nenze pa kampelwa (As though I was on a swing)

Pa FB Tayali akalumenyana na Mwewa (On Facebook, Tayali and Mwenya are still fighting)

Could it be that I'm stressing, I'm making a big fuss

I know that there's somebody looking for a face mask

Coz they die without a proper doctor and a nurse

Without the medication they'll end up in a hearse

Are we born with a gift or maybe blessed with a curse?

With the afterlife I'm certain you might end up in a church

Just not long ago nenzomvelela Seer 1 (Just not long ago I was listening to Seer 1)

Enze once a topic pathu na pa bondi panu (He was once a topic in my home and in yours)

Since when chimfine chinankhalapo big issue (Since when did a flu become as serious issue?)

Sambani kumanja, sanitise na ma tissue (Wash and wipe/sanitise your hands with tissue paper)

Now my all shows are cancelled

I'm living on my investments

Pray to God he saves my family and my best friends

Everything quarantined, house, money, car

Pray for Zambia, for the globe, for Africa

Dzuwa (The sun)

Ambuye chotsani dzuwa (God, release the sun)

Dziko langenewa nguwe (The world has rusted)

Tazunzika kopanda dzuwa (We have suffered without the sun)

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Dziko lichita nga yangenewa ndi ululu (The world seems to have been poisoned)

Tiyamika mweo apo pampano (We praise you, up there on that seat)

Dzuwa, dzuwa, dzuwa (The sun, the sun, the sun)

One key issue that comes out of ‘Dzuwa’ by Slap Dee is the chaos that ensues after the disappearance of the sun. The persona prays to God asking God to help by releasing the sun.

Similar to Mathew Tembo’s *We Will Dance Again*, *Dzuwa* also starts with giving a background to the situation. One key difference between these two songs is that *We Will Dance Again* opens with a positive outlook on life while *Dzuwa* shows that there has been a continuous fall into darkness. For instance, *We Will Dance Again* talks about how in the past people used to visit their loved ones. They would live together and eat together while also being merry. In *Dzuwa*, on the other hand, that even before COVID-19, there was cholera, which was followed by load-shedding before the gassing of people in various social spaces. This was, in a way, people killing each other as gassing led to people’s deaths.

The situation finally escalates into COVID-19, which is represented by the absence of the sun. The power of the sun remains unquestionable considering that while *We Will Dance Again* makes considerable reference to it, *Dzuwa* is actually centred on the sun as *dzuwa* is the Chewa word for the sun. This song, in this case, suggests that one cannot speak of COVID-19 without reference to the sun. It further suggests that the COVID-19 situation is not any different from the absence of the sun. It can be argued that this emanates from the fact that COVID-19 led to quarantine, which meant most people were in enclosed spaces with little or no access to the sun. The sun, in this case, is a representation of the life force without which man has no life.

The song is also a prayer as it is addressed to the spiritual realm by addressing God. God is asked to make available the sun because man has suffered without the sun.

Ambuye chotsani dzuwa (God, release the sun)

Dziko langenewa nguwe (The world has rusted)

Tazunzika kopanda dzuwa (We have suffered without the sun)

Ambuye tidalitseni na dzuwa (God, bless us with the sun)

The fact that there is no presence of the sun explains why the sun has rusted. The explanation to this could be that there is a lot of moisture in the absence of the sun as the earth remains damp. This dampness has led to the rust suffered by the earth.

The call is made to God and the fact that the earth has rusted because of the absence of the sun, contributes to making the sun hold a special position in the life of the earth. It is possible that as much as the request for the sun has been made to God, one can easily see that there seems to be a small difference between the sun and God. The power of the sun and God seem to be the same. For instance, in one of the verses, the speaker says:

Vikakuvuta langa kumwamba upemphe zuba (When things go wrong, look up and pray to or ask for the sun).

The verse also shows that while one can ask for the sun from God, they can also ask for help from the sun. This equates the sun to God. It says that the sun is man's god. Whenever man has a problem, he should know that the sun will handle the problem. The absence of the sun has made the COVID-19 problem worse.

There has been more reference to the spiritual space by referring to how pastors cannot continue with fasting as they have had too much of it. As it has been presented, one can suggest that prayer has gone unanswered for so long that it becomes unnecessary to continue praying without getting positive results. It can also be argued that the verse is making reference to the absence or meaninglessness of food. The absence of food suggests a form of fasting as it is noted that everything that was tasty is now tasteless: *Venzomveka munshe vinaleka nakuwama*. This verse may also refer to anything that was acceptable is no longer acceptable. The word *kumveka* can refer to the senses of taste and touch or even smell *sivimveka kununkha*. It can also refer to knowing, hearing or understanding. The choice of the word *kumveka*, in this case, stretches the meaning of the verse and ultimately, allows every listener to assign their own meaning to the song.

With the view that the sun is key to life, the persona ultimately shows that the presence of sickness and absence of medicine is death.

Coz they die

Without a doctor and a nurse

Without the medication, they will end up in a hearse

The verses above aim at showing that there is need for healing for the current situation without which there will ultimately be death. Since the title and subject of the song is *dzuwa*, it follows that the sun is the main form of healing. The sun, therefore, in this song, represents the doctor, the nurse and medication. Without any of these, there is sudden death. This is the reason that the word *dzuwa* has been mentioned repeatedly in the song. The sun, therefore, is life itself in this song and attacked by COVID-19. This song also shows high levels of despair among the people as the rusting country is a clear sign of a failed and dying country and planet too.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 situation ravaged the earth and led to widespread depression as can be noted from the earlier studies referred to in this article. Mental health challenges followed many during the period and artists, particularly musicians, turned to music to address the situation. Both *We Will Dance Again* and *Dzuwa* show signs of despair in the community. The songs make an appeal to God to change the situation. Both songs show that life has been compromised by the situation.

While *We Will Dance Again* suggests that there is light at the end of the tunnel, *Dzuwa* merely ends at the point of praying without showing any sign of hope. *Dzuwa* shows a community that cannot go beyond despair and that the sun should respond, or everything will be obliterated as the absence of the sun has reached the ultimate core of life by leading to the country to rust. While

We Will Dance Again suggests that people will not be virgins forever as there is still hope, *Dzuwa* suggests that the rust that the country is facing is not likely to be reversed. It appears that the prayer in *Dzuwa* is merely meant for the persona to be said to have taken some action than merely watching the situation deteriorate without doing anything. *We Will Dance Again* says, ‘I pray you and I will have a little dance again’, while *Dzuwa* says, *tazunzika kopanda dzuwa*. The two views can be said to be representative of the Zambian communities. There are those who believed that the situation would normalise, while others merely prayed and waited for nature to take its course. This shows that as people died, some thought that it was a natural course and some would die, while others would live. It also means that there are those who believed that one day, the situation would change for the better.

Most importantly, both songs try to use the metaphor to represent their worlds. In both songs, the world has been centered on the energy of the sun, giving a god-like power to the sun. This suggests that the position of the sun in the universe is central to all living creatures. Without the sun, man dies, and the earth is obliterated. It further means that the sun determines the progression of all life. With the sun fully available in man’s life, it is unlikely that COVID-19 would have this much impact. The sun, therefore, has a special power to answer man’s prayers, including that of making the sun itself available and the same sun that is being made available dealing with man’s problems and, ultimately, restoring man’s life to the desired level.

Both songs have used the metaphor to interpret their situations, which suggests that there is a limited understanding of the situation. Because the understanding is limited, the best way to share it is using the metaphor as this will transport the deepest concerns of the community and allow others to understand. This is because the language of images transcends all languages and, therefore, becomes a universal language. Poetry is the universal language in this case.

This analysis has shown that there was disruption in society during the COVID-19 period and man was unable to face the situation without making reference to ‘higher’ powers hence, the prayer that came through the songs. The songs speak for both the affected and the afflicted and, therefore, also play the role of medium to coping with the situation. The ability to share the pain and also to share the hope is ultimately what everyone looked forward to. The songs used in this case became a path to the acceptance of the situation and also a path to locating the future. The songs helped both the artists and listeners to meet at the emotional as opposed to the scientific level to comfort each other and also give strength and hope to each other about a better tomorrow.

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