Glossed text

See p. 12-13 in:


The following lines, taken from the play in van Dyk’s (c1765) language manual, present a detailed account of a plantation funeral that is generally considered to be true to life (van Trier-Guicherit 1991).

Zwarte Officier: Tappe kissi myki wi go mastra negere
Black Overseer: ‘Close the coffin, let’s go. Gentlemen,

oenno zikkesi zomma ope da homen
2PL six person lift DET.SG woman
you six persons, lift up the woman.

boe ply den homan lange negere alle
Q place DET.PL woman with black all
Where is the woman with all the blacks?

oenno wakke na hippi kry man moe
2PL walk LOC heap wail man must
You must walk as a group, the wailers must

wakke na fessi oenno no vergiti wan
walk LOC face 2PL NEG forget one
walk at the front. Don’t forget a

zanti kongo-kongo.
thing come-go
thing! Come, come!

Zangers: Da zo wi jarri didde zomma go mi jan do,
Singers: ‘That’s how we carry the dead away. I celebrate. We

wi zarri fo joe alle da joe go lassi zo, na
1PL regret for 2PL all that 2SG go expire so LOC
are very sorry for you. It is you who died like this.
Next month we will offer up water, so your mouth will not be dry. The precentor dies, o! I will celebrate like this always.’

Zwarte Officier: Potti na gron gimi klossi doe put LOC ground give.1SG cloth do
Black Overseer: ‘Place (the coffin) on the ground. Give me some cloth to

across coffin cut DET.SG cloth with
cover the coffin, cut the cloth with a

knife scratch across put LOC inside
knife across. Lower the coffin in

ground put dirt good LOC top finish
the ground, cover it good with dirt on top.

Done, done, it’s good like this.’