From Slavery to Freedom
Chapter 3: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

Audio Translations

Male dialogue translations courtesy of Elie Kihonia, artistic director, AfrikaYetu Drum and Dance Company. Female dialogue translations courtesy of Mama Kadiatou Conde Forte, artistic director, Balafon African Drum and Dance Company.

Language – Malinke

Woman in pain
My feet, my hands; I don’t know why I am here; where are they taking me?; They took my mother, they took my father, and they have taken my children; I’m scared, please God help me; God help me; I don’t know what I will do now; I can’t move; They beat me; my back hurt, my feet hurt.

Woman raped
Who’s that?; What’s happening?; What do you want?; don’t hold me; what did I do to you?; leave me alone; don’t do this to me; don’t touch me; why do you do this to me?; don’t hold my leg; don’t hold my hand; I’ve done nothing to you; [crying, crying, crying].

Warning / protest
Hey, hey, where are you going?; I told you to come; take the water and give it to your daddy; these white people there are going to kill all of us; we need to unite; listen to me; they are coming for you.
Woman singing
“Dudumba” – Guinean folk song
What is this?
I am ready to fight back
Nola play the dumdum for me so I can move
Five o’clock in the morning
Come and fight me and I will fight you back
I’ll meet you on the dock
Even in the rain we are moving anyway
I am going to sing my song
Beat me, I am going to beat you too

Language – Susu

Woman in pain
My feet hurting me; why, why, the chains are hurting me; what happened to me;
I’m tired, every day they beat me; why do they chain me; what am I going to do?;
don’t hurt me leave me alone; I’m tired; don’t hurt me; I can’t move; why do you take me?

Woman raped
Who’s that?; don’t hurt me; leave me alone; don’t touch me; don’t hold me; why
do you hurt me?; don’t lay on me; leave me alone; [crying, crying, crying].

Warning / protest
Heh come here, bring me that water and take it to your daddy down below; don’t
stay there too long; sit here with your mother; these white people – we are going
to get them; sit down and don’t move.

Woman singing
“Lost Love” – Guinean folk song
Where are you going?
Are you going to leave me?
I got a song for you
It is hard for me to let go
This is hard for me
We’ve been together all this time only to be split apart
Conte, Camara”

Language – Kikongo

Man in pain
Pain, sad, pain, sadness [crying].
Man getting beaten
   Leave me alone; that’s ok; it is painful.

Protest
   Get the hell out of here, get off me, you white man.

Resistance
   All men, all women, stand up let’s go and fight!

Man singing
   “Mzila Kongo”
   In the road on the way to Kongo
   My child, child you are crying, why are you crying?
   A glorious moment will come
   Come, come, listen, something big is happening on the other side
   It did happen.

Language – Lingala

Man in pain
   I feel too much pain, [crying].

Man getting beaten
   Let me go, it’s hurting, ‘mother’ [crying].

Protest
   You killing me, I will kill you too, I will fight.

Resistance
   Whatever happen let it happen; We are strong; Let it come in the night or evening.

Language – Kiswahili

Man in pain
   Pain, I’m in pain. They have injured me.

Man getting beaten
   You are hurting me. Why are you hurting me?

Protest
   Leave me alone. Don’t come near me you white men. You don’t know what I am about to do.
Resistance

*Let’s come together free ourselves.*

Harambe!

*Harambe! Wan a yetu – Wa na Afrika!*

Man Singing

“Asante, Asante, na cha kola”

*Thank you, thank you for the food.*