

### **Tanure Ojaide, 'A Poem for My Grandchild'**

With crude oil gushing into slave ships  
refurbished into free-market super-tankers

Government assures its people of development  
with proceeds from export and spot market deals.

My children have had no scholarships,  
they can't fish or tap rubber as I once did

the river transformed into a snake of a tomb  
and the forest fraught with flares and seepage.

No jobs for them graduates in the oil sector  
even as wells litter our family's farmland!

Mobile policemen brandish guns in the dearth of prospects  
and from above American Marines keep the pipelines safe.

Villages of imploring eyes marching, their hands up-  
raised with green-leafed branches, are mowed down.

CNN & BBC Inc. embedded with Chevron reports the women  
stripping to save their children and men from death are barbaric.

With my grandchild born, the new Stone Age  
of a nation very black in the books has begun

with refilled slave ships refurbished into super-tankers  
anchored at Escravos and poaching inland as centuries ago.

### **Tanure Ojaide, 'To Aridon'**

To the visionary of time-toned images  
I return to gather my share.

To the memory god I return  
to imbibe clarity  
from his perennial stream  
after revolutions of suns and moons.

Divine Sorcerer who captures  
every day in its light and dark,  
unwind your spool.

I will follow the sure lane of your thread  
to cultivate correspondence.

I will follow to the farthest.

I want to rake your gift  
from every nook and night.

I will be at the beach  
to welcome the waves  
you ride through and be splashed with tales of blue.

I will scale the mountain  
for your secret of elevation.

I want your measured rain  
to wash off chronic dust  
and to bring a record harvest.

To Aridon I must return.

### **Study Questions**

- 1) What does 'A Poem for My Grandchild' reveal about the current situation in Africa?
- 2) Why must the speaker directly address their grandchild in order to register the sentiments?
- 3) How is harmony created in 'To Aridon'?
- 4) Who or what, in your opinion, is Aridon?
- 5) Trace all the possible themes of the two poems.