

stage and the screen, managers of arts education and politicians will find the book useful. However, other general readers who take more than passing interests in Humanities, culture and their modes of representation will find keen affirmation of their indispensability to national rebirth. The chapters are full of workable ideas on how to wake up a sleeping giant from his long slumber so that he can set forth at dawn towards the direction of new possibilities.

<b>Title of Book:</b>	<i>We're Fish</i>
<b>Genre:</b>	Poetry
<b>Author:</b>	Ahmed Maiwada
<b>Publishers:</b>	Image Books
<b>Place of Publication:</b>	Yaba, Lagos
<b>Date of Publication:</b>	2017
<b>Pages:</b>	i-vi + 78
<b>ISBN:</b>	978 978 952 122 7
<b>Reviewer:</b>	David Ekanem Udoinwang, PhD

In contemporary age where humanity is being tossed by the winds of power hegemony, socio-economic and political fragmented along prejudiced divides, pushed to the fringes and assailed by the threats of self-inflicted extinction, the undeclared war between the weak and the powerful has continued to rage on. The pursuit of knowledge, wealth and power continues ironically to push the wheel of invention and ambition to the edge of ecological anarchy, and writers conscious of the drift continue to bring their artistic energy and creative vision to bear on the dangers that humanity daily live by. Environmental writers and activists, eco-centric scholars and critics in the multidisciplinary arena have deployed various means at their disposals to engage with the multifarious dangers posed by the toxic activities of man towards fellow man, and towards the environment, in the bids to re-create a consciousness of the common embryogenesis or common source that ties all life to a common destiny and shared fate. The concerns for global harmoniousness and survival of life on the planet Earth inform the recurrent eco-centric themes in the bulk of environmental narratives of the postmodern universe. Ahmed Maiwada's poetry in *We're Fish* draws on the dialectic of universal connection of all things to celebrate the heritage of our common humanity, and by so doing explores the paradoxical footages of human progress and development. *We're Fish* is one book that is likely to hold any lover of poetry that stumbles upon it in suspense until the last line is read.

Ahmed Maiwada's *We're Fish* is an anthology of poetry with seventy-one poems in the volume. *We're Fish* is sublimely artistic, inventive and innovative, and every line in the poems that make up the collection reels out with mystical vibes that make the tonality, symbolism and the images momentous and lively through the renditions. In its metaphorical imaginativeness and socio-environmental exigencies, the entries in the volume unravel uniquely realized creative texture that is garnished with symbols, images and sustained on an aura of surreal and the realistic, while at the same time exuding uncommon freshness and an arousing presence not common in Africa's poetic firmament in terms of graphology, musicality and rhythmicity. Somehow the collection aspires towards deconstructing the extant creative myths of the great sacred scripts, and at some other instance challenges the Darwinian secularized evolutionary imaginings concerning the common origins of species. In *We're Fish* all creatures albeit, all creation merge/submerge into one liquid totality where mankind, in unity with the diversity of the non-human eco-aquatic lives become bonded into one stream of biologically eternal natural/supernatural beingness. Sometimes the vibes of the poems ooze out specter of breezy spells that resound with eerie coldness of spell-bearing dirge. This is aptly captured in poem 49 (p.53) where the persona laments: 'We're in a field, filled with tears'. In this metaphorical consciousness, the 'unknown' persona in the renditions points at humans as swimming afloat the glassy streams of reality like 'migrants' bound to uncertain fate, travelling on streams of memories of timeless time, and sometimes sounding hymnal on guided journeys amidst the choir of life-forming spermatozoa 'in the rivers', gyrating like 'swimming gametes', and bound to the absurdity of beingness, yet fated to the apocalypse of ultimate death and decay, while fleeing for safety in 'croc-torn water', fated and torn between death and life!

The anthology is a sweet-sounding artistic work, bedecked with rhythm of conviviality, yet strident in the social context of the rendition. It is also an embodiment of existential questions that border on creation myths and consciousness, environmental sustainability, the contradictions of the notion of common humanity and the perilousness of life on earth, the paradox of human progress, the contradictions of power pursuits and others.

While every poem in the anthology matters and not one is taken for granted, the poem 'Introduction' in the preliminary page (p.v) summarizes the thematic momentum of the book: 'Save/our/sea'. The same tonality echo in

poem 38, (p.41) that reads thus:

'We're loafs-soaked, scattered, on aqua;  
Scattered on the streets of *living* city;  
Scattered on water: aqua, ruwa, Rwanda;  
    Bled gills, unbreathing;  
    East Wind's harvests.

The voice of the persona sometimes turns intensely strident, deadening and elegiac all to mark the ultimate danger of an atrocious humanity and the dying world, could be heard blaring through the lines in poems 40, 41 and 45. Such pointing words as: 'The sea has stopped breathing... the rivers no longer giving' (p.44)', 'Death is a sentence,/Mortal us the predicates (p.45), and 'But now you lie, so cold...(p.49) and other such as: 'I can't breathe remix' (p.69) and the lines in the last poem in the collection: 'Tonight we're cubes./Dissolved;/Tonight we're cubes/Dissolving-/We sleep' (p.71), all sound so gravely and alarming that humanity just have to pay attention to the clarion calls of the various groups of 'Save the Earth Campaigners', who have been drumming the warning to humanity for green justice, equity, a better, safer world and harmonious universe that is accommodative to all life. *We're Fish* is a finely crafted collection of poetry worth the effort of the author and both attractive and informing to the reader. It is freshly thought out, and exceptionally, an interesting anthology of poetry that is very relevant for the present global moment.