

A Congregation of Cows: Moo Haiku by Robert Epstein, Copyright 2019 , ISBN 978-1-7335979-2-0, Middle Island Press, P.O. Box 354, West Union, W.V. 26456

Reviewed by Tom Clausen

A Congregation of Cows: Moo Haiku by Robert Epstein is a heartfelt call to readers to recognize the "wondrous lives of animals we call cows" and "to remind readers that they are precious beings with an existence independent of our own." Robert Epstein is a psychotherapist, poet, editor and animal rights advocate who became an ethical vegan in 1975. He "abhors the horrors and atrocities perpetrated against cows and calves (as well as countless pigs, sheep, chicken and other non humans)." Epstein provides a detailed preface in which he profiles his sense of Ahisma, which in essence is nonviolence. He traces the roots of Ahisma to a "Hindu religious tradition which dates back thousands of years" in which "cows have been singled out for reverence and protection since ancient times" The preface opens with a quote:

"Cow protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world"
~ Mahatma Gandhi

This collection contains a variety of quotes related to cows, a Foreword by Nathaniel Altman, who inspired Epstein's conversion to vegetarianism, Notes containing reflections by the author shedding light on his passion for protecting all life and an Afterword by Miriam Wald. The book has the following chapters; Passing Cows, How They Are, Hidden in Plain View, Like Them, Like Us, *Aghyna* (Not to Slaughter) as well as a closing section with Recommended Reading.

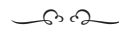
In closing here are four haiku from this compassionate and transcendent collection:

sweet grass
a newborn calf
nuzzling her mother

what's a *slaughter tag*, mommy?

her face, her gaze
that one could be
my mother now

make no mistake
they too desire
what you & I do



contractions by kjmunro, Red Moon Press, ISBN 978-1-947271-36-4 copyright 2019. \$15

Reviewed by Tom Clausen

Haiku are by nature a compressed form of poetry and in *contractions* by kjmuro you will find a collection of 90 haiku and senryu that provide an eclectic slice of life.

With superb economy and concision, worthy of the title, kjmunro takes us on a candid tour of her life, delivering poetic experiences with insight.

first date sweating spicy burrito

the view
from the high diving board
I saw it once