

Antonio Vallone

The Onion's Gift

Why ancient Egyptians worshiped
onions has been lost to history.

Today, cooks know it was for the tears
onions cause. When they peel

off the onions' golden robes
& cut into their flesh—imperfectly
round like a minor god's--

the act makes them weep two ways:
for the onions' loss

taken from the peace of the field
to boil in this soup or stew
or fry with vegetables & meat, then

for what sweet bounty
they, and the guests invited to sit
around the cooks' table, will receive.

Antonio Vallone is an associate professor of English at Penn State DuBois. He is also founding publisher of MAMMOTH books, poetry editor of *Pennsylvania English*, a co-founding editor of *The Watershed Journal* Literary Group--which provides publishing journal and book publishing opportunities for Pennsylvania writers and runs Watershed Books, a writer's space and used bookstore. He is also a board member of *The Watershed Journal* and the Pennsylvania College English Association. His collections include *The Blackbird's Applause*, *Grass Saxophones*, *Golden Carp* and *Chinese Bats*. Forthcoming are *American Zen* and *Blackberry Alleys: Collected Poems and Prose*.