[that] no longer ran with its burden of dirty water," and his imagery of an "immaculate sky-piece"—indeed a compound-word worthy of a surrealist—seems as if pulled from the ecstatic prosody of Kerouac's *On The Road*. All of these authors, no less Carnevali, felt the need to slip the fetters of tradition and create a new poetic language.

Autobiography of a Language re-envisions Carnevali as an author of astonishing fecundity of invention and resituates him within the vibrancy of twentieth-century literature. Furthermore, Ciribuco provides a vista upon the creation of *an*—as in one among many—Italian-American aesthetic. This is not easy territory; nor one with set borders. Ciribuco evaluates Carnevali's ambivalence toward a range of milieu for which the poet feels empathy but never quite fellowship: the Italian communities in America (he looks down on them) and in Italy (he feels rejected); the modernist circle (he feels they patronize him); classic Italian authors (he feels they are irrelevant); his family (he feels abandoned). Behold the condition of Modern Man. Carnevali evokes it in all its existential angst. Ciribuco's splendid study—nuanced, well-researched, and deeply insightful with regard to his character and his art—allows us to see the contradictions as well as the conjunctions in the forging of a New World identity and the language invented to express it.

Unburial by Marc Alan Di Martino. American Fork, Utah: Kelsay Books, 2019. 98 pp.

Review by Stefano Maria Casella
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"Polaroid family histories," a line from his poem "Endgame" (65), might be an apt definition for Di Martino's narrative sequence in verse that discloses his family history-ies not unlike a series of snapshots or movie clips taken throughout a long span of time and seen again and reconsidered *a posteriori*, in "the evening with the photograph album" (Eliot, "East Coker"). From the *incipit* in prose, "Runaway," to the last lyric, the cinematic analogy and echoes are multiple, mirroring the course of the story itself. The beginning dates from the Fifties-Sixties in Italy, the mythical years of the economic "boom": it mentions or alludes to *Vacanze Romane* and *La Dolce Vita*, with their legendary interpreters, Audrey Hepburn and Marcello Mastroianni. And, most importantly, we are introduced to his mother, "An American, more or less innocent, abroad in Rome." The critical turning point is represented by *Kramer vs. Kramer*: "That movie was a mirror of our life" ("A User's Guide to Rocks and Minerals" 25) and by the theme of divorce: a word, but above all an event, recurrent in the memory of the author, having left a

painful, indelible mark on him.

It is a complex story, with highs and lows, dreams (the dream of the young girl visiting Rome and finding her "love") and tragedies ("Tragedies" 37), pleasant episodes and gloomy moments. But no happy ending. It opens with the meeting of a young American girl ("An American in Rome" or "The innocent abroad") with a kind of local Latin lover: a couple destined to become the author's parents. Under their sign, the whole sequence is structured, from romance through crisis and divorce to the end of their earthly existence.

Hence the urgency of the "unburial" (ritual, symbolic, psychological, autobiographical, a little bit Orphic, and quite a lot Freudian) from their son, the poet, now an adult, whose instruments are Memory and Poetry, as in the sorrowful *explicit* of "The Hole" (39):

> Only memory persists
> bringing him back to me like Anchises,
> a ghostly apparition in my arms.
> Poetry redraws what time erases
> but can it fill these empty spaces?

Almost the whole ritualistic, mythological, psychological, and creative substance of the collection is encapsulated in these lines, from the epic allusion to Anchises, father of Aeneas, to all that which is implied in it. This includes the theme of the exile, in Di Martino's case the unresolved dilemma about his roots: between Italy and Rome in particular, the city of his father, and Brookline, Massachusetts, the city of his mother, perfect emblems of the Old Continent and of the New World, of civilization going back thousands of years and of the "Nayer Velt" ("On My Great-Grandfather's 131st Birthday" 57) to the meeting with the beloved *umbra* and the impossible embrace (Homeric, Virgilian, Dantesque) and the awareness that only Memory and Poetry, in a bittersweet combination, can perhaps offer comfort and appeasement. But the scars of life—divorce of his parents; new and not always easy family relationship; and above all the sense of rootlessness ("Stolen Borders" 55; "*Luftmensch*" 59; "On my Great-Grandfather's 131st Birthday" 57)—these remain ineradicable.

Other dichotomies characterize the poet's familial background and are made evident throughout the "narrative": a Roman father and a Jewish-American mother, different roots, cultures, traditions, rituals, ways of life, languages. As regards this latter aspect, one cannot miss the linguistic counterpoint between section II, "redshift," dedicated to the father, with its enjoyable lexical quotations in Roman dialect, and section IV, "requiem," dedicated to the mother, marked in its turn by Yiddish words and expressions.

The father is characterized mainly by two categories: astronomic and mineral-geological imagery—the most remote and unreachable, and the earthiest and closest. He is now projected in the stars (constellations, black holes etc.) and fixed/sediment[at]ed in the rocks/geological formations. And by the theme of divorce. The mother is characterized by food and its tradition/rituals, by sex (only as a verbal provocation and breaking of taboos), and by the close connection with her relatives (grandpas & grammas, uncles). And by the motive of [re-]marriage. In any case it is this female figure which is entitled to open and close the parable; the father disappears with a mere "DOA" ("Unburial" 47) in the middle of the story (and of the book itself).

From a formal/stylistic point of view, worth recalling is the high frequency of similes ("like/as") followed by various metaphors; as regards the form of the stanzas, several poems are structured in unrhyming (or scarcely/imperfectly rhyming) tercets and/or couplets, one in quatrains, and some (seven) in fourteen lines, arranged in various patterns and schemes, formally—but only formally—recalling the number of lines of the sonnet.

Remarkable also are the subtle degree of literariness and intertextuality, through quotations, epigraphs, echoes and allusion from several authors of the literary tradition. And it is in the very sign of literary tradition that the poet concludes his book: after "Unburial," his father's "exit" (44–47) and "Requiem for an Ocean Burial," the ritual scattering of his mother's ashes (85–87), the poet directs his gaze "To the Horned Moon" (91), in a XXI c. *claire de lune* which closes the circle of one of the most ancient poetic *topoi* begun some seven centuries B.C. by Alkman's unforgettable nocturne.

In the Name of the Mother: Italian Americans, African Americans, and Modernity from Booker T. Washington to Bruce Springsteen by Samuel F.S. Pardini. Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2017. 263 pp.

Review by Francesca de Lucia
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This study explores the complex relations between Italian-American and African-American cultures. Going beyond analyses of Spike Lee's films centering on Italian-American characters or African-Italian-American Kym Ragusa's *The Skin between Us: A Memoir of Race, Beauty, and Belonging*, Pardini focuses on the racial position of Italian Americans within a wider and deeper context.

In the Name of the Mother is divided into six chapters and covers a wide variety of key topics and authors, with special attention paid to the concept of modernity and the presence of mother figures. He thus moves from Booker T.