individualità. In questo modo, infatti, Petrarca può offrire al lettore il resoconto di un'esperienza poetica insieme personale e universale capace di riassume, pur senza pretese di esemplarità assoluta, "il senso della storia degli uomini e dell'esistenza del mondo" (58). È precisamente nell'affermarsi di questo "tempo della coscienza, dell'anima" (40) che Morabito riconosce, all'interno del *Canzoniere*, gli effetti di quella rivoluzione tecnica e culturale che, proprio a partire dall'inizio del Trecento, sancì l'emergere di un nuovo modo di concepire il tempo e di percepire il suo scorrere.

LEONARDO FRANCALANCI

University of Notre Dame

Sherry Roush. *Speaking Spirits: Ventriloquizing the Dead in Renaissance Italy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. Pp. 263. ISBN 9781442650404. \$ 70.

Eidolopoeia, the creation of speaking characters out of the distinguished dead, is a pervasive rhetorical device in classical, medieval and early modern western literature. In this study of works produced in Italy in both Italian and Latin, Sherry Roush takes her readers far beyond the most familiar examples of eidolopoeia in such works as Dante's *Commedia* and Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* in order to explore the phenomenon in a wide range of less well known works from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, with special emphasis on authorial motivation, reader reception and rhetorical function. Ultimately she distinguishes the two principal purposes to which early modern eidolopoeia is typically put: to establish authoritative versions of texts, and to prompt action in legal or political affairs that at times even regarded the fate of the speaking spirit's own corpse. As Roush explains, the term derives from *eidolon*, and thus describes a process of "idol-making," a kind of impersonation, the creation of a simulacrum of a person through which the author can ventriloquize a message that might otherwise be considered inappropriate or ineffective in the author's own mouth.

Roush meticulously reconstructs the cultural contexts for such manipulations of the identities of the dead, starting with Dante's "great eidolopoetic experiment" in the *Commedia*, as well as the use of the figure by Petrarch in the *Africa* and *Secretum* and by Boccaccio in the *De casibus*. An important insight into the

implications of eidolopoeia is provided by Boccaccio, who notes that death will soon reduce him to a mere *fabula*, a narrative that describes what is not real. In this way, Boccaccio recognizes the fates of all the literary speaking dead, who can have no control over the purposes to which subsequent authors will put them. Roush provides various examples of Italian Renaissance authors who seek to establish the approval or promotion of their work through the voices of distinguished literary spirits, such as Antonio di Tuccio Manetti (*Notizia di Guido Cavalcanti*, 1469), Vincenzo Bagli (in his vernacular translation of Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris*, 1506), and Girolamo Malipiero (*Il Petrarca spirituale*, 1536). This last provides a particularly egregious example of the extreme uses to which speaking spirits might be put, since the Franciscan priest Malipiero has the ghost of Petrarch visit him in his poem in order to approve of Malipiero's purging of any reference to earthly love in this bowdlerized edition of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. In effect, Malipiero has Petrarch experience spiritual conversion after he has died, so that he can be made to place his posthumous stamp of approval on a complete revision of his most popular work, one in which awkward references to Christian piety substitute his declarations of love for a woman.

The busiest of all the speaking spirits is that of Dante himself, to whom Roush devotes a whole chapter. Starting with Boccaccio's account of Jacopo Alighieri's vision of his father's spirit in the *Trattatello in laude di Dante*, which purportedly indicated the hiding place of the last thirteen cantos of the *Paradiso*, Roush catalogues the various purposes to which Dante's spirit was put, including the efforts of such figures as Leonardo Bruni, Francesco Filelfo and Marsilio Ficino to politicize the memory of Dante as a means of promoting the prestige of Florence. Although Dante's spirit is not always visualized or personified in these works, the continual emphasis on the symbolic return to his city on the part of the exiled poet, conjoined with various civic efforts to repatriate his actual bones, reveal a prolonged Florentine fixation on the propagandistic value of Dante's corpse, on "the public value of [Dante's] body for the body politic" (87). A significant example of a new ideological purpose for Dante's memory can be found in Girolamo Benivieni's "Cantico in laude di Dante," a poetic dream vision which Benivieni, a former follower of Savonarola, appended to his edition of the *Commedia* (1506). Here Dante's soul, the pre-eminent Florentine cultural icon, is not only dragooned into proclaiming prophecies that evoke the attitudes of the discredited Savonarola, but is even made to promote Benivieni's

own poetic abilities in an effort to secure his rehabilitation into Florentine literary society.

Roush provides further examples of early modern Italians who were disposed to put words in the mouth of Dante's spirit in order to associate their own political exile with that of the Florentine poet, such as Machiavelli (*Discorso intorno alla lingua nostra*, 1515) and Zaccaria Ferreri (*Somnium Lugdunense de divi Leonis X*, 1513). In the *Discorso*, which eschews the use of an overt dream vision, this is achieved through the suggestion that Florentine feelings of guilt concerning Dante's ignominious exile might find themselves repeated in the case of Machiavelli's own banishment by the Medici. The strategic use of spirits might also serve to signal a shift away from Florentine literary hegemony, as Roush affirms in her description of Jacopo Caviceo's prose romance *Peregrino* (1508). The proem of this popular work includes an appearance by the ghost of Boccaccio, who declares he has renounced Florence in order to reside in Ferrara, a patent effort not only to influence reader reception by proclaiming the merits of a new cultural center for Italy, but also to evoke a parallel with Caviceo's own autobiographical experiences as a native of Parma whose tumultuous career included resettlement in Ferrara.

Roush devotes much attention to the implications of the efforts of writers to manipulate the ideological attitudes of famous dead people in order make them serve new, and at times unlikely, purposes. Such efforts might even constitute a complete reversal of the dead person's stated desires, as in the case of Girolamo Benivieni's two sonnets featuring the speaking soul of his friend Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Although Pico, under the penitent influences of Savonarola, had requested a humble burial outside of a church, Benivieni, writing decades later, saw fit to have Pico's spirit request the transfer of his corpse to a sumptuous tomb on sacred ground, a tomb which in fact he will share with Benivieni himself. As Roush asserts more than once in this book, instances of eidolopoeia might purport to benefit the speaking spirit, but in fact they are always calculated to work to the advantage of the manipulating author in some fashion: the author uses the spirit as an authoritative mouthpiece for self-serving ends. In this way, the dead are deprived of their true identities, and their perspectives are effectively re-authored in order to serve purposes of which they might never have approved.

Roush ends her study with an examination of three early modern texts that provide eidolopoetic reports concerning the afterlife, by Antonio da Rieti, Giovanni Morelli and Petrarch, whose *Testamentum* and *Epistola posteritati* are

meant to provide the author with a voice after death. Although Roush's aim here, as elsewhere, is to emphasize that the truths proclaimed by eidolopoetic narratives are those of the author who writes the narrative, not those of the speaking spirit, the example of Petrarch's letter to posterity provides a striking example of a "spirit" who does without the usual intermediary, thereby taking control of the ways in which his own image and message are portrayed after death. Of course, this effort provided no guarantee that unscrupulous authors of subsequent generations, such as Malipiero, would not seek to manipulate Petrarca's ghost for their own ends. By the conclusion of this masterful study of authorial strategies, the reader fully comprehends the degree to which the dead are consistently portrayed as keepers of unique knowledge in early modern Italy, even if it must also be recognized that the storytellers who conjure them are truly the ones in command of the knowledge that the spirits purportedly display. The soul might live on, we are to understand, but it has lost the right to craft its own identity, in an age relentlessly devoted to the co-opting of voices of authority.

CHRISTOPHER NISSEN

Northern Illinois University

Alison K. Frazier, editor. *The Saints between Manuscript and Print: Italy 1400–1600*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2015. Pp. 495. ISBN 978--0-7727-2181-5. \$ 49.95.

Il bel volume raccoglie parte degli atti del convegno svoltosi presso la American Academy in Rome nel 2008 ed altri contributi (sei per l'esattezza) che si sono aggiunti nei successivi tre anni. Inizialmente l'idea del curatore era quella di espandere la ricerca fino ad includere una analisi globale (in senso geografico) del rapporto manoscritto-libro, ma questo desiderio si è rivelato impossibile da realizzare, data l'ampiezza del lavoro che già questo volume, incentrato sulla sola Italia, presenta. L'argomento del rapporto tra culto dei santi e cambio dei media non è stato sistematicamente analizzato prima d'ora anche a causa della sua complessità. Secondo la curatrice "Our aim is to understand both cult and media more fully and in the process to underscore the nexus of cult and media as a site of intense cultural production and innovation" (15).