Mario Aversano. *Il velo di Venere. Allegoria e teologia dell'immaginario dantesco*. Napoli: Federico e Ardia, 1984. Pp. 204.

Aversano's hypothesis in the eight closely linked chapters which make up this volume is that in the *Commedia* symbolism, along with theology, contributes to the formation of certain images whose function it is to guide. This is particularly true of *Purgatory*, the *cantica* in which bewilderment is most prominent. By stressing Dante's theological engagement, Aversano reveals new meanings of both cultural and poetic value.

Chapter 1 is an analysis of the concluding tercet of *Purgatory's* prologue, in which Dante invokes the muse of epic and lyric poetry, Calliope. Chapter 2 dwells on the same tercet, more specifically on the expression "Disperar perdono." The volume takes its title from Chapter 3, which establishes an association between the apparition of the planet Venus and the dream of the unveiling of the Siren. Chapter 4 suggests that Virgil's *auctoritas* for Dante is as unquestionable as that of Holy Scripture and intimates epicurean influences on the Christian poet. Chapter 5 examines the tercet which presents Aurora while Chapter 6 analyzes the syntax of *Purgatorio* 1. Chapter 7 is a reading of *Paradiso* 11 which takes into account the pre-eminence of the doctrinal and theological dimension. In Chapter 8 we find observations on the term "mezzo," which, as Aversano notes, appears frequently in the passages recalling the Sirens.

Included in the volume are a note on the symbolic meaning of the reed in *Purgatory* based on its scriptural roots, a comment on the symbolic meaning of the colour green in *Purgatory* and an appendix on the "valletta amena" in *Purgatorio* 7.

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Giovanni Barblan, ed. *Dante e la Bibbia*. Biblioteca dell' "Archivum Romanicum" 210. Firenze: Olschki, 1988. Pp. 370.

This volume is a compilation of the material presented at the international convention, *Dante e la Bibbia*, held in Florence from Sept. 26–28, 1986. The items (25 in all, including brief "interventi") are organized chronologically, as presented. Many articles are concerned with the thematic, structural, or theological significances of intertextual relationships: of how and why Dante makes his biblical appropriations (often filtered through traditional exegesis). Lucia Battaglia Ricci, nevertheless, admonishes scholars to adopt a more comprehensive appreciation of Dante's complex mode of assimilation.