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.

AST

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.

Peter Dronke and Peter Armour present two different approaches to the interpretation of apocalyptic images in Dante's earthly paradise. Joan Ferrante treats the "wresting" of Biblical allusions by medieval writers (including Dante) for their own purposes, while Guglielmo Gorni focuses on the serious association of parody and scripture in Dante's work. Anna Chiavacci Leonardi demonstrates the centrality of the Resurrection in the *Commedia*, Jeffrey T. Schnapp, of the Transfiguration. Francesco Mazzoni discloses, for the first time, Psalm 147.16–18, along with Augustine's commentary, as the key to the interpretation of *Purgatorio* 30.85–99; Peter S. Hawkins examines Virgil's scriptural quotation "benedetta colei" (*Inf.* 8.45) within its context in Luke 11; Rachel Jacoff associates correspondences between Jeremiah and *Par.* 27 with thematic and structural considerations permeating both texts; Cesare Vasoli delineates the specific role of scriptural references in the *Convivio* and *Monarchia*. Giorgio Petrocchi discusses the role of Saint Paul in the works of Dante; John Freccero, of Augustine's *Confessions*. Marguerite Mills Chiarenza focuses on the relationship of Dante's theocentric vision to his geocentric universe.

Other articles examine specific areas of interest. Menachem Emanuel Artom outlines the role of the "contrapasso" in Hebraic literature, while Marco Adinolfi delineates eighteen Dantean *personaggi neotestamentari*, and Domenico De Robertis demonstrates that "la Bibbia è uno dei termini fondamentali" of the "sguardo" which united Guido Calvalcanti and Dante. In the polemic between theologians and biblical exegetes, according to Giuseppe Mazzotta, Dante defined his position by making use of both to establish himself as "il poeta di 'et . . . et' e non di banali 'aut-aut.'"

Index of Biblical locations with appropriate Dantean references.

CLM

Teodolinda Barolini. *Dante's Poets. Textuality and Truth in the Comedy*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1984. Pp. xiv + 312.

Barolini's book attempts to outline what she calls a "self-reading" of Dante in the *Commedia* through an investigation of his reading of other poets, both epic (historical) and lyric (contemporary), and of his own early works. Her goal is to determine Dante's perception of textuality through an intertextual approach. Beginning with an analysis of his self-treatment as a poet, she focuses in Chapter 1 on the *Commedia*'s three autocitations. Chapter 2 addresses the question of Dante's changeable attitude towards the vernacular poets of the Sicilian school and the *stil nuovo* generation, and their relationship to his own "new style." Specifically she notes "Dante's urge to rewrite poetic history," which she sees in his exclusion from the *Commedia* of Guittone d'Arezzo and Guido Cavalcanti, who are both "poets Dante suspects of having been new before him." Instead Dante chooses to include less successful lyric poets in order to reinforce