Giorgio Petrocchi. *Vita di Dante*. Bari: Laterza, 1986. Pp. 241

In his *Vita di Dante*, Giorgio Petrocchi attempts to reconstruct "in maniera completa e organica la vicenda umana, politica e letteraria del poeta." He does this by alternating purely biographical chapters with chapters dealing specifically with one or more of Dante's literary works from *Il Fiore* (which he believes along with Contini to have been written by Dante around 1286) to the *Paradiso*. Throughout he makes frequent reference to his previously published works on Dante, in particular to his "Biografia di Dante" in volume 6 of the *Enciclopedia dantesca* (Rome 1978, pp. 1-53) and to *Itinerari danteschi* (Bari 1969), where many of the problematic issues which he mentions in the present biography (obviously written for the general, intelligent reader) are treated in much greater detail.

In this sense, *Vita di Dante* is a kind of summary (without exhaustive argumentation) of many of the conclusions concerning various aspects of Dante's life and works which Petrocchi has reached over a long period of time. For instance, concerning the date and place of composition of the *Commedia*'s three *cantiche*, he states: "Una cronologia particolareggiata sarà sempre impossibile, ma individuare due grandi isole di lavoro, Lucca per l'*Inferno*, Casentino per il *Purgatorio*, dovrà essere ritenuto con sufficiente approssimazione un punto fermo nella genesi della *Commedia*" (155). Moreover, according to Petrocchi, the *Inferno* was begun in 1304 and published "nella seconda metà del 1314." On the other hand, Dante started to write the *Purgatorio* in 1308 and published it "nell'autunno del 1315" (147, 190). As for the *Paradiso*, it was begun around 1316 in Verona (190).

"Bibliografia Essenziale." Index of names.

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Michelangelo Picone, ed. *Dante e le forme dell'allegoresi*. Ravenna: Longo, 1987. Pp. 173.

All of the essays in this volume deal, in one way or another, with the vexed question of Dante and allegory, and more specifically that kind of allegory which the author calls the "allegory of the theologians." To be sure, this is a subject which has not been neglected by recent Dante criticism. One thinks immediately, as Picone himself points out in the introduction, of Auerbach's "figural realism" and Singleton's "biblical allegory." However, the essays in this collection shift the critical ground somewhat: their interest is not so much ideological as it is methodological and textual. They focus on allegory not as a figure Dante uses to authenticate the poem's religious and prophetic message, but rather as an exegetical device, as a technique for reading and interpreting texts, Dante's texts in particular. More specifically, the objective of the collection "è quello di verificare i