

complex reflections of the poet's own embattled self during the wars of truth. Sherwood's postscript argues that Francis Bacon's public service reflects his family's sense of vocation, especially the formative influence of his mother Anne. However, Bacon's infamous trial for graft is noticed only in passing and its implications for the book's thesis deserve fuller comment.

Sherwood's argument, both broad and deep, surveys an important theme in the careers of six notable Elizabethans. It deserves a place alongside its new historicist contenders as a rejoinder to be reckoned with.

Peter Mitchell. *"The Purple Island" and Anatomy in Early Seventeenth-Century Literature, Philosophy, and Theology*. Madison and Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007. 718 pp. + 14 illus. \$99.50. Review by WILLIAM E. ENGEL, UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH, SEWANEE.

James Joyce, obviously familiar with the scope and tenor of Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island*, included but later struck an extended allusion to it in the manuscript version of *Ulysses*. Overall the poem has not fared well among its modern critics. For example in his anthology of *Later Renaissance Nondramatic Verse and Prose*, Herschel Baker, perhaps as a benevolent gesture, included twenty-two stanzas of "the notorious *Purple Island*," but with the caveat that Fletcher "exhaustively and implausibly expounds human physiology with a blend of Spenserian pastoralism and relentless allegory." Frank S. Kastor's conclusion that it is "an unmistakable disaster" gives some indication of why it long has been considered a post-Spenserian curiosity worth knowing about but perhaps not worth reading.

It was just such universal opprobrium that made me eager to read it as a graduate student spurred on, no doubt, by what Poe called "the imp of the perverse." With only a gut-feeling to go on, I was convinced there had to be more to the poem than I was seeing but simply had not yet acquired the critical acumen to find it. At last though, Fletcher has been vindicated in full by Peter Mitchell, who has published the best critical account of the poem to date. Indeed, he has written what may well be the last book ever needed on *The Purple Island*.

While this is said with admiration for Mitchell's laudable achievement, it is equally true this study is a tour de force of scholarly indulgence—a trait shared with Fletcher's poem. The critical apparatus alone attests to the unbound quest for thoroughness, with its 25-page bibliography, 61-page index, and 146 pages of notes. This book goes well beyond what seventeenth-century scholars have come to expect from a monograph, especially given its fulsome repetition and extensive summing up of each stage of the argument before moving on to the next point: "This chapter began by stating that the question of the purpose and the intentional and reflective directions of *The Purple Island*, that emerge from an analysis of the work's design, may be inquired into by situating the work in the contexts of the readers' expectations and reception" (173). By the same token, when Mitchell takes issue with a critic, typically he states the argument in exacting detail and then outlines his objections before taking each in turn: "The problem with Healy's argument, however, is fourfold. Firstly..." (264).

In his conscientious attention to the subtleties of scholarly debates Mitchell implicitly self-selected his intended audience, consisting exclusively of advanced graduate students and dedicated seventeenth-century scholars. He has written a book that makes a leisurely, albeit rigorous, case: "The conceptual metaphors of anatomy and the analogies of the microcosm coalesce in the allegorical threshold figure and the figurative design of *The Purple Island*, providing what is not only a coherent understanding of anatomy, but also a consistent, figuratively complex image, emblem, or speaking picture of anatomy, which explores the shared entailments and significant metaphorical connotations of islands, bodies, and buildings to an extent that is unprecedented in anatomy textbooks in its systematicity, coherence, and persistence" (472).

How, one might well ask, can a book on Fletcher's *Purple Island* be sustained for 478 pages of involved argumentation? That Mitchell does so is much to his credit; as is the fact that, notwithstanding the incredible size of this volume, only two minor typographical errors escaped detection—one involving the doubling of a comma (189) and the other the doubling of an apostrophe (441). This study shows Mitchell to be a meticulous and responsible scholar, as well as a subtle

reader not only of seventeenth-century poetry and prose, but also of the main early modern anatomical texts and their illustrations (most notably Vasalius, Estienne, Corti, Harvey, and Paré). He is equally adroit when teasing out cruces debated by historians of science and medicine (Pagel and Nicholson), scholars concerned with the nature of metaphorical language (Lakoff and Johnson), literary critics (Quilligan and Belsey), as well as early modernists focusing on notions of the body (Laqueur and Sawday) and of gender (Traub and Butler).

Without losing sight of the fact that *The Purple Island* is his ultimate point of focus, Mitchell presents some conclusions that have far reaching ramifications for early modern studies in general and anatomical figuration in particular. For example, early on he observes that the poem “does not merely draw figurative ideas from anatomy and the tradition of microcosmic speculation, but allegorically transforms them into the geographical and social features of the Isle of Man” (87). This allows him later to make claims for the poem regarding “how the body as microchristus and as a microcosm of the terrestrial globe or geocosm contributes to a system of antecedently existing associated commonplaces on the threshold figure” (117). By uncovering the providential plan which Thirsil (the poet-shepherd speaking from within the text) narrates, Mitchell makes a compelling and convincing case that the characteristic feature of the innovation of the Isle of Man figure “is the way in which the ingenuity and effort it expends in trying to shore up and preserve correspondences and analogies, and the entrenchment of its reaction to ‘what e’re is in the continent’ [*P.I.* 1.53.3], especially Roman Catholicism, help to concretize and give succinct yet infinitely expandable expression to the quasi-Paracelsian and alchemical notion of natural philosophy as individual revelation, and to the emergent ideologies of English (or British) Protestant individualism and nationalism, which ironically introduced a language which would in the history of the discourse of science, religion, and nationhood help to bring about a collapse of what the implied author of *The Purple Island* endeavored to preserve” (441). In the whole of Fletcher’s poem then, Mitchell argues, “the analogy between Man and an island becomes a metaphor in which the correspondence is extended to provide a justifying context for recent anatomical discoveries” (473).

By way of linking the poem suggestively to the *vanitas* tradition (125-30), showing the extent to which the margin notes are more discursively expansive than the concise clarifying, nomenclatural, or indexical marginalia typical of the day (246), and indicting how *The Purple Island* figurality relates to Harveian anatomy especially as regards the systematic circulation of blood (351), Mitchell clarifies how the poem “develops a highly sophisticated soteriological epistemology and hermeneutics of the ‘scientific’ and poetic concepts of ingenuity and eloquence, which Fletcher’s religious prose shows us is modeled on the operation of the Holy Spirit in *ecclesia*, which is in turn modeled on the operation of the soul through the heart and brain in the human body” (478).

As the subtitle indicates, this is a book about anatomy in early modern literature, philosophy, and theology. It succeeds in delivering what is promised by situating *The Purple Island* in its social, political, scientific, and historical contexts. Mitchell is to be commended for showing contemporary readers how the whole of creation, as it was reckoned in seventeenth-century England, came to be subsumed in Fletcher’s Isle of Man.

Vera J. Camden, ed. *Trauma and Transformation: The Political Progress of John Bunyan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008. xiii + 185 pp. Cloth \$55.00. Review by WILLIAM W.E. SLIGHTS, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

The key words “Trauma” and “Political” take on special significance in the title of this collection of eight essays, emerging as they did (all but one) from the Bunyan Triennial Conference held hard on the heels of 9/11/01. Vera J. Camden says in her introduction that the “national trauma” and “cultural cataclysm” following that day were “adumbrated” in Bunyan’s England:

Because of this conjunction between his time and ours, our scholarly discourse about religious pluralism and intolerance, rebellion against authority and the temptation to tyranny, the psychological impact of military and domestic service, the gendering of dissent and the dissent from gen-