

with contemporary and modern interpretations, physical and artistic. Texts often appear with illustrations. These he considers mainly in terms of narrative, imagery and emblem, etymologies and myths, rhetoric, and aurally of assonance, consonance, and dissonance, seeking emotional equivalents among interpretations by critics then and now. For both he scrutinizes critical annotations and analyses, taking umbrage at overhasty generalization, easy moralizing, and restrictive labeling, seeking instead physical sensations, contradictory shadings, and nuanced hues.

Bruce R. Smith's *The Key of Green* is an extraordinarily informative, insightful, and provocative work of scholarship. His proposal merits trial by every English renaissance literary scholar and consideration by literary critics of all persuasions, especially those of linguistic and rhetorical bent like myself, who might come to green our analyses. By no means will all agree with every proposal and interpretation. Smith can appear arbitrary and idiosyncratic, as in his placement of notables by thinking more and less dominantly through body or mind. He can overextend evidence, grasping at every potentially useful allusion to curtains on the stage. But some of his engagement with us comes from his pushing thesis and evidence as far as, perhaps sometimes further than, it can hold up. More engaging still are his passionately thoughtful interpretations of propositions, art, and evidence. *The Key of Green* is a moving, useful, pleasurable read.

John Kerrigan. *Archipelagic English: Literature, History and Politics 1603-1707*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. xiv + 599 pp. \$49.95.  
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As the title suggests, John Kerrigan's is an uncommon, and an uncommonly sophisticated, volume of history and literature. Such studies often suffer from an awkward choice between figure and ground: is the history the background for the literature, or the literature for the history? The concept of "archipelago" avoids this fraught choice, meaning as it does both a sea with many islands and a group of islands. The word also enables Kerrigan to avoid bruising tender ethnic sensibilities: as J.G.A. Pocock has remarked, "the term 'British

isles' is one which Irishmen reject and Englishmen decline to take quite seriously" (Pocock, *The Discovery of Islands* [2005], 29). Pocock pioneered treating "British history" as "multinational: a history of nations forming and deforming one another and themselves" (Pocock, 94). Kerrigan offers a series of case studies in seventeenth-century literature that exhibit this process of forming and deforming at work.

This approach works best with authors whose biographies exhibit attractively complex patterns of affiliation. Take one writer "who moved from the Gaelic Catholicism of rural Donegal, through the Ulster-Scots Presbyterianism of Derry, and higher education in Glasgow and Edinburgh, into freethinking pantheism" (89). This is John Toland, mentioned only in passing; but the intricate negotiation of national allegiances here is exemplary and furnishes the model for some of Kerrigan's best analysis, as in a strong chapter on Drummond of Hawthornden. Kerrigan expertly registers the "pragmatic" tacking between and among England and Scotland (and factions of each) and makes a good case that Drummond's intricate web of allegiances has led to his neglect in traditional literary history—and renders him particularly in tune with our own period.

Kerrigan's mode of interpretation does not always succeed with major figures. Herewith three comments on Shakespeare. *Coriolanus* "works with London perceptions of Anglo-Scottish difference in the polarity that it establishes between the fractious, politically complex world of Rome and the more archaic, aristocratic, and militaristic milieu of the Volscians" (18). Discussing Shakespeare's elimination of "the many years of good government which Macbeth brought to Scotland before he sank into tyranny," Kerrigan admits that the compression may serve dramatic purposes but argues that "one consequence of the change is that Scotland is never shown as a properly functioning state. It seems to be waiting for English intervention to stabilize it" (102). In Hamlet's Denmark too, we should be thinking of Scotland; of Fortinbras Kerrigan asserts that "[t]he analogy with a Scottish prince claiming rights of memory in England, and threatening to take the throne, if necessary by force, would have struck Shakespeare's audience" (16). Each of these contentions is extracted from a longer discussion, and different readers will perhaps have dif-

ferent estimates of their merit; but many will probably locate one or all toward the weaker end of a spectrum of plausibility.

Where, however, a life of chameleonic political activity combines with a rich literary output, Kerrigan comes into his own, as in a fine concluding chapter (before an Epilogue) on Defoe, whose multiple but never utterly opaque disguises as spy, agent, and provocateur furnish a model for his fiction: the “novels tend to be written from the point of view of protagonists who are vigilant because they have something to hide” (327). Readers who want to observe how splendidly Kerrigan works at the top of his form should open the book at its physical (and thematic) center: a reading of Marvell’s poem “The Loyal Scot” (274–80). A sample: “The deviousness of the poem is apparent in Marvell’s so positioning himself that he can ostensibly speak well of Lauderdale . . . in order to heighten tension between the king’s inner circle and the bishops”; the listing of bishops affords “a climax that stresses their responsibility for breaking up Protestantism. As Marvell punningly puts it: ‘What the Ocean binds, is by the Bishops rent,/ The[ir] Sees make Islands in our Continent.’ They turn Britain itself into an archipelago” (279).

Not everything in Kerrigan’s large book is at this level. One does have to make one’s way through longeurs, as with the Welsh scholar-poet Evan Evans (“But let not Cambrian science be forgot”; 396): “Ground down by his pastoral duties, frustrated by lack of security, and by the failure of patrons to support his work—to love, as he saw it, their country—he was overtaken by alcoholism and isolation. It would take a Fanon to do justice to the connections between Evans’s irascible fractiousness (notorious at the time) and his bilingual self-division” (397). But this, fortunately, is not typical either. *Archipelagic English* will enrich any scholar’s understanding of the seventeenth century. One shares Kerrigan’s fond hope that *Archipelagic English* (not least with its rich apparatus of primary and secondary sources) may serve to alleviate a problem the author identifies at the outset of his tome: “What is taught in certain North American universities as ‘British Literature’ turns out, especially for the period between Shakespeare and Defoe, to be ‘Eng. Lit.’ by another name” (8).