the poem’s various versions. In the first chapter, Warner argues that the B version did not achieve as much circulation as has been previously thought. Rather, the C text was widely transmitted among scribes and readers. In order to prove his case, he draws upon the influence of the poem on the letters of John Ball.

Through detailed textual comparison, Warner’s second chapter discusses the extent of scribal conflation. He argues that a now lost manuscript, Bx, was supplemented by lines of material from the C manuscript. This argument is further expanded in the following chapter. Building upon the findings of the previous chapter and dismissing the idea of a misfolded bifolium, he discusses how loose sheets influenced the transmission of Bx. In his last chapter, Warner highlights the strong similarities between the B and C versions of the two final passus. He concludes that B 19–20 were originally the final passus of C, which were added to B at a later stage.

The strength of Warner’s study is his detailed engagement with textual comparison and analysis. The author’s extended knowledge of the textual tradition of the Piers Plowman manuscripts contribute to a new understanding of the texts’ circulation. The complexity of his work is complemented by a number of illuminating notes. However, he presupposes a reader deeply familiar with the terminology and methodology of textual scholarship. This makes his study difficult to access for scholars working outside of the field of textual scholarship, which is a shame, because his findings are of relevance not only to scholars familiar with the work’s stemma, but also to academics working on Langland’s work in general.

Sarah Laseke


Demitra Papadinis’s choice of play for the third instalment of her First Folio editions is an appropriate one. The series, which aims to eschew academic editorial tradition in favour of a return to the original “acting” text found in the Folio (1623), owes much to the work of Richard Flatter, whose influential 1948 Shakespeare’s
Producing Hand controversially pointed up *Macbeth* as the only Folio play in which “no traces of ‘editorial’ intervention” could be found, rendering it an ideal text in which to source Shakespeare’s own “hints, pointers, and signposts” for performance (Flatter 1948, 94, 10). Although Papadinis’s editions are not the first to print the Folio texts for this kind of theatrical use — Patrick Tucker and Neil Freeman have been propounding Flatter’s methods in Folio-based editions since 1991 — *The Tragedie of Macbeth*’s puts its strict adherence to the Folio text to lexical use in an exhaustive survey of the play’s images, puns, and allusions, layers of meaning often lost through later editorial standardization.

These theatrical and lexical approaches, though arising from remarkably distinct critical traditions, function interdependently in the edition. Both the consideration of potential dramatic practice and the attention to euphemistic or indefinite language require intricate examination of an accurate text, and, in many cases, the extensive glossing of the variant meanings surrounding unfamiliar terms alleviates the need for modern editorial emendation. At other points, this absence of emendation renders the text beneficially ambiguous, allowing both Papadinis and the reader space in which to determine and interpret the Folio’s words in multiple respects. This movement towards a broader potential for textual interpretation is perhaps part of the reasoning behind the work’s unwillingness to refer to other editions of *Macbeth*. Although Papadinis characterizes the textual work of modern editors as repressive, censorial, and interfering, many of the glosses given in *The Tragedie of Macbeth* fruitfully overlap with the interpretations of previous editors, and would be enhanced through comparison, just as this work’s sophisticated analysis of the play’s imagery and word-play contribute to debates set out in previous academic editions.

Papadinis departs from Flatter’s theory that *Macbeth* was the product of only Shakespeare’s pen, to acknowledge critical acceptance of the presence of Thomas Middleton’s hand in III.v and IV.i and to reproduce his verses from *The Witch*. In contrast, though Flatter recognized the Folio’s inherent fallibility, stemming from the many agents involved in its production, Papadinis controversially argues for scribal and compositorial exactitude and accuracy, an approach which may require qualification in further editions, especially those of Folio plays which exhibit the textual influences