



universität
wien

DIPLOMARBEIT

Titel der Diplomarbeit

“Society and Witchcraft in Mary Sharratt’s *Daughters of the
Witching Hill*“

verfasst von

Sandra Führer

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2015

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 190 344 299

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:

Lehramtsstudium UF Englisch UF Psychologie/Philosophie

Betreuer:

Ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Franz Wöhrer

HINWEIS

Diese Diplomarbeit hat nachgewiesen, dass die betreffende Kandidatin oder der betreffende Kandidat befähigt ist, wissenschaftliche Themen selbstständig sowie inhaltlich und methodisch vertretbar zu bearbeiten. Da die Korrekturen der/des Beurteilenden nicht eingetragen sind und das Gutachten nicht beiliegt, ist daher nicht erkenntlich mit welcher Note diese Arbeit abgeschlossen wurde. Das Spektrum reicht von sehr gut bis genügend. Die Habilitierten des Instituts für Anglistik und Amerikanistik bitten diesen Hinweis bei der Lektüre zu beachten.

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I confirm to have conceived and written this Diploma Thesis (Diplomarbeit) in English all by myself. Quotations from other authors are all clearly marked and acknowledged in the bibliographical references, either in the footnotes or within the text. Any ideas borrowed and/or passages paraphrased from the works of other authors have been truthfully acknowledged and identified in the footnotes.

Signature

Acknowledgements

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all those who stood by me during the time of my studies and who shared the happy memories as well as the bad ones. My special thanks go to Ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Franz-Karl Wöhrer, who agreed to supervise this thesis and did so with great patience and valuable assistance. Thank you for introducing me to the inspiring world of the Lancashire Witches, as well as countless other masterpieces of literature.

I would also like to thank my family for supporting me in any possible way a family ever can!

Special thanks to Janine, who endured my attitude as well as my passionate and never-ending rambling about this particular witchcraft-case, which has become the topic of my thesis. Thank you for always standing by my side, no matter what happens!

It is natural to unnatural people, and peculiar unto
witchmongers, to pursue the poor, to accuse the simple, and to
kill the innocent.¹

¹ qtd. in Poole *Histories and Stories* 34

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. DAUGHTERS OF THE WITCHING HILL	3
2.1. <i>MARY SHARRATT – ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND THE BOOK.....</i>	3
2.1. <i>CHARACTERIZATION OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS</i>	8
2.1.1. <i>The Family of Elisabeth Southernns</i>	8
2.1.1.1. <i>Elizabeth “Bess” Southernns alias Demdike</i>	8
2.1.1.2. <i>Elizabeth “Liza” and John Device</i>	10
2.1.1.3. <i>Alizon Device</i>	11
2.1.1.4. <i>James “Jamie” Device.....</i>	12
2.1.1.5. <i>Jennet Device</i>	13
2.1.2. <i>The Family of Anne Whittle.....</i>	14
2.1.2.1. <i>Anne Whittle alias Chattox</i>	14
2.1.2.2. <i>Anne “Annie” Redferne</i>	15
2.1.2.3. <i>Elisabeth “Betty” Whittle</i>	15
2.1.3. <i>Other characters of importance</i>	16
2.1.3.1. <i>Alice Nutter</i>	16
2.1.3.1. <i>Roger Nowell.....</i>	16
2.2. <i>COMPARISON OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE NOVEL WITH THE HISTORICAL FIGURES</i>	17
3. ELABORATIONS OF RELEVANT TERMS	20
3.1. <i>WITCH, SORCERER AND CUNNING-FOLK</i>	20
3.1.1. <i>The Devil’s mark and “Pricking”</i>	22
3.2. <i>WITCHCRAFT</i>	23
3.2.1. <i>Christian Charms</i>	24
3.2.2. <i>Image Magic.....</i>	25

3.2.3. <i>Witchcraft vs. Magic</i>	25
3.2.4. <i>Familiars</i>	26
3.3. <i>THE WITCH-HUNTS AND THE EUROPEAN WITCH-CRAZE OF THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURY</i>	26
3.3.1. <i>History of Witch-Persecution</i>	26
3.3.2. <i>Witchcraft in the law court: Information, Examination and Indictments</i>	29
3.3.3. <i>The three statutes in England</i>	29
4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	31
4.1. <i>POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS SITUATION</i>	31
4.1.1. <i>Reign of Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603)</i>	31
4.1.2. <i>Reign of James I (r.1603 - 1625)</i>	31
4.1.2.1. <i>The Demonology and The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster</i>	32
4.2. <i>SOCIETY AT THE TIMES OF WITCH PROSECUTION IN EARLY 17TH CENTURY ENGLAND</i>	33
4.3. <i>THE CASE OF THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES</i>	35
4.3.1. <i>The Samlesbury witches</i>	35
4.3.2. <i>The Pendle Witches</i>	36
4.3.3. <i>Events leading up to the trials</i>	36
4.3.4. <i>The trials</i>	36
4.3.4.1. <i>York Assizes</i>	36
4.3.4.2. <i>Lancaster Assizes</i>	37
5. MANIFESTATIONS OF WITCHCRAFT AND SOCIETY IN THE NOVEL	40
5.1. <i>SOCIETY</i>	40
5.1.1. <i>Family constellation</i>	40

<i>5.1.2. Religious situation</i>	42
<i>5.1.3. Neighbourhood</i>	44
<i>5.1.4. Women and beggars</i>	46
<i>5.2. WITCHCRAFT</i>	48
<i>5.2.1. (Alleged) Abilities</i>	48
<i>5.2.1. Representation of witch-stereotypes: The old hag vs. the young and seductive “femme fatale”</i>	54

6. IMPLEMENTING THE NOVEL “DAUGHTERS OF THE WITCHING HILL” IN THE EFL CLASSROOM 57

<i>6.1. TEACHING READING IN THE EFL CLASSROOM</i>	57
<i>6.1.1. Selecting a text</i>	57
<i>6.2. THE USE OF NOVELS</i>	58
<i>6.2.1. What is a novel?</i>	58
<i>6.2.2. Why use a novel in the EFL classroom?</i>	59
<i>6.2.3. Why use this novel in the EFL classroom?</i>	60
<i>6.2.3.1. Relevance for the Curriculum</i>	61
<i>6.2.3.2. Tasks and strategies</i>	65
<i>6.3. TEACHING POSSIBILITIES</i>	68
<i>6.3.1. Lesson Plans</i>	68
<i>6.3.1.1. Lesson 1</i>	68
<i>6.3.1.2. Lesson 2</i>	68
<i>6.3.1.3. Lesson 3</i>	69
<i>6.3.1.4. Additional Lessons</i>	69
<i>6.3.1.4.1. Lesson I</i>	69
<i>6.3.1.4.2. Lesson II</i>	69
<i>6.3.1.4.3. Lesson III</i>	70
<i>6.3.2. Detailed Description of Lesson Plans</i>	70

7. CONCLUSION	75
8. REFERENCES	77
<i>8.1. ELECTRONIC SOURCES.....</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>8.2. PICTURES</i>	<i>79</i>
9. INDEX.....	80
9. APPENDIX.....	83
<i>WORKSHEET #1</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>WORKSHEET #2</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>WORKSHEET #3</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>WORKSHEET #4</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>WORKSHEET #5</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>WORKSHEET #6</i>	<i>92</i>
<i>WORKSHEET #7</i>	<i>93</i>
11. ABSTRACT	94
12. GERMAN ABSTRACT	96
13. CURRICULUM VITAE	98

List of Abbreviations

“CEFR”	“Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”
“EFL”	“English as a Foreign Language”
“L1”	“First Language”
“L2”	“Second Language”
“r.”	“Reign”
“WPF”	“Wahlpflichtfach”

1. Introduction

The Lancashire witch-trials are one of the most famous and best known of the 17th century England. The reason was not simply the high amount of accused, but also their detailed documentation of one Thomas Potts, who was clerk to the court. Twelve people came from the area around Pendle and were charged with the murder, causing madness, the use of image magic, cannibalism, child murder and secretly held Sabbaths in order to plot their devilish deeds. Ten of them were tried at the famous Lancaster Assizes on 18th and 19th August 1612, one died in prison shortly before facing trials, and one was tried at York Assizes on 27th July 1612. Nine women and two men were found guilty of using witchcraft in order to harm people or damage their property, one was found not guilty. Ten of the condemned were executed by hanging, while one, who was said to have killed an animal had to find punishment on the market places. This high amount of victims, which were hanged together, was very unusual for that part of English history.

The so-called Pendle witches made up a good part of the accused, and came from two, probably rivalling, families, the Southernns and the Whittles. The two oldest members, Elizabeth Southernns, also known as “Demdike”, and Anne Whittle, also called “Chattox”, were known cunning women of Pendle Forest. They were well up in their eighties when the accusations began. The other six accused were families and friends, who had lived in the same area as they had. Three people, who also had to face trial, came from around Samlesbury and where thus called the Samlesbury witches. The evidence in both cases was provided by superstition, hearsay and, most important, two child-witnesses, nine-year old Jennet Device and fourteen-year old Grace Sowerbutts.

Needless to say, the religious struggle and change that took place during the 16th and 17th century, as well as natural catastrophes, hunger and growing poverty took it's toll on society and created a tense situation, which, combined with superstition and personal loss, resulted in the witchcraft accusations that led to the trials which became the best known ones of English history.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse in how far society and witchcraft are interwoven in this particular witchcraft case, and how the American born author Mary Sharratt portrays it in her novel *Daughters of the Witching Hill*. Sharratt creates a unique narrative situation by sharing the story of the Pendle Witches through the eyes of two of the accused, Elizabeth “Demdike”

Southerns and her granddaughter Alizon Device. This narration style reveals social constellations, witchcraft and everyday life in a time of tension and superstition from two completely different positions.

First, in chapter two of the thesis, the author Mary Sharratt and her academic development will be introduced, together with a synopsis of the main events in the book, as well as a description of the main characters and a comparison of the fictional people to their historical counterparts.

Second, the third chapter of the thesis offers an introduction of terms relevant in order to create a basic knowledge of these. Issues such as “witch”, “witchcraft” and “witch-hunts and –crazes” will be further examined, as there is a broad spectre of differences that need to be clarified in order to be able to analyse the novel in greater detail.

Third, there will be a basic overview of the historical background focusing on the religious and political situation during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I, as well as the parallels between King James’ *Demonology* and Pott’s *Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster*, the social situation during the times of witch prosecution in the early 17th century in England, before elaborating facts concerning the individual trials of the Pendle and the Samlesbury witches.

The following chapter offers the main analysis of the before mentioned issues and how they manifest in the novel. In terms of society, family constellations, religion, the situation in the neighbourhood and the life of women and beggars are the main sub-categories, and the issue of witchcraft in the novel includes the abilities that the witches allegedly owned and the representation of two stereotypes concerning witchcraft, the old hag and the femme fatale.

2. Daughters of the Witching Hill

2.1. Mary Sharratt – *About the author and the book*

Mary Sharratt was born on November 13th 1964 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She studied German philology at the University of Minnesota. The American-born writer lives in the Pendle region of Lancaster, England, together with her Belgian husband, Jos Van Loo. Before her settling down in England, she spent twelve years of her life in Germany, which, in addition to her interest in herbal medicine, and sacred music was a source of inspiration for one of her most recent novel *Illuminations: A Novel of Hildegard von Bingen* (2013), based on the life of one of the most fascinating women of medieval Christianity.

Further work include her novels *Summit Avenue* (2000), which tells the story of a young German immigrant in Minnesota during the time between 1911 and 1919, who translates fairy tales for an old woman into English and by doing so gets drawn into a new and mysterious world. Another novel is *The Real Minerva* (2006), in which three women have to find out what it means to reinvent oneself and what identity is really cut out for the individual. *The Vanishing Point* (2006), tells the tale of two sisters, one raised by her father, as if she were his son, including the skills of a physician, and the other pushes the limits of propriety. Another novel is *Daughters of the Witching Hill* (2011), which is the topic of this thesis. Her next novel to be published shortly describes the star-crossed love affair between the infamous poet William Shakespeare and Aemilia Bassano Lanier, one of the first professional women poets in Renaissance England.

Mary Sharratt is also the co-editor of *Bitch Lit*, a subversive UK fiction anthology. *Bitch Lit* is an alternative genre to *Chick Lit*, but in contrast to the latter, which deals mainly with topics and problems of womanhood, family and romance, *Bitch Lit* portrays the protagonist as an independent female rebel, not afraid of breaking the rules and doing this without regret. *Bitch Lit* celebrates the female anti-hero, who defies social conventions and expectations, and is an icon of power and bravery.

Sharratt is also the author of a number of short stories, which have been published in *Twin Cities Noir*, a series of volumes of short stories, which spotlight various cities and locales around the world, as well as in journals and anthologies, including *Wall Street Journal*,

Huffington Post, *Publisher's Weekly*, and *Minnesota Magazine*. She is the winner of the “Nautilus Gold Award” 2013, the “WILLA Award” and a “Minnesota Book Award” finalist in 2005. She is also a regular blogger for *Feminism and Religion*.²

The novel to be analysed in great depth in this thesis is *Daughters of the Witching Hill* (2011), which retells the haunting story of the Pendle witches and their trial, resulting in seven women and two men being condemned as witches and hung on Gallows Hill in 1612. The main evidence was the testimony given by nine year old Jennet Device, which resulted in the execution of nearly all members of her family. Sharratt is the first author to tell this tale by giving a voice to the witches themselves, making them the main narrators of the book.

The story starts from the point of view of Elisabeth “Bess” Southern, also known as Mother Demdike, an old widow who tries to keep herself and her family, her daughter as well as her three grandchildren, from poverty and starvation. As times grow dire, she meets a spirit, named Tibb, in the guise of a young man, who promises her to teach her everything she needs to know to become a “cunning woman” that will enable her blessing and healing animals and humans alike. Tibb becomes her familiar spirit, never leaving her side till the very end. What forms the basis of Demdike’s blessings are an in-depth knowledge of herbs and a number of Catholic prayers, charms and rituals, which is considering that the story is set during the reigns of Elisabeth and James I a dangerous undertaking.

Demdike starts a career as a cunning woman, and after healing a young boy, Matthew Holden, whose death was already quite close, folks start to make use of her gift more and more. Many call her to bless their horses and other animals, children, adults and some even ask of her that she should curse their enemies. For Demdike, however, it was important to stay on the path of virtue, the one of a cunning woman and not to engage in witchcraft and sorcery for destructive ends. Her fear of endangering her family and herself by using her “cunning skills” was considerable. One day, when there is a crop-failure and people are near starving, she is asked to find a thief by using her skill, which she does. It turns out that her best friend’s daughter, Betty Whittle, is to be blamed. Even though this does not have devastating consequences for Betty, because of Demdike’s help, she feels as she is in depth with her friend. When Liza marries John Device, who has always been afraid of Chattox, the abyss between the two dear friends starts to grow. Liza bears her first child James, or Jamie,

²https://www.bookbrowse.com/biographies/index.cfm/author_number/1863/mary-sharratt? (7.3.2015).

who turns out to be “simple-headed”, a disability for which Liza puts the blame on Chattox and her curse.

Chattox asks Demdike to help save her daughter from the sexual harassment of the landlord’s son, Robert, who tried to rape young Annie. Demdike believes she has no other option than to introduce Annie and her mother to the art of black magic to punish Robert, before it is too late. Annie and Chattox make clay images and soon after that Robert seems to suffer from illness and finally dies, but not before accusing Annie of having bewitched him. Chattox, having already met her familiar, becomes a powerful witch, when Demdike’s powers seem to decline, rumour runs that Chattox is in contact with the powers of darkness.

When Liza bears her second child, Alizon, she makes her mother promise not to meddle with Chattox anymore, which she has to promise in order to get Liza to concentrate on giving birth and save her from death. At Alizon’s christening, the last straw connecting Demdike and Chattox rips, as John demands from Chattox to leave his family alone. From this moment on, their paths part, and this is also the end of the first part of the book, with Demdike as a narrator. The narrative point of view changes to Alizon, who starts her narrative at the time when she was five.

The switching of narrators is an effective way of viewing the events from more than one perspective. One aspect that is clearly shown differently is the attitude to magic. While the reader is invited to embrace the issue of magic as it is described by Demdike, in a positive way (i.e. “white magic”) with Alizon’s point of view the reader sees the situation through the eyes of a young child at first, who is not able to imagine just how thin the line between healing and harmful witchcraft can actually be. Alizon does not have her abilities right from the start, nor does she wish for them to appear. Another difference can be seen in the representation of witchcraft as practiced by Chattox. When Demdike speaks about her old friend, she is keen on protecting her name against any rumours going around, as well as defending her actions as long as is possible. The reader’s response is influenced by Demdike’s admiration of her friend, which starts to change when Alizon gains her voice. Alizon is very much influenced by the opinions of her parents as well as other folk in Pendle and soon sees Chattox as the wicked witch most others believe her to be, not understanding Demdike’s support: “How could she speak so, as though Chattox were the wronged one and I the mischief-maker?” (Sharratt, 166)

Alizon’s part in the story starts out with her and Demdike visiting Alice Nutter, whose husband is on his death-bed and discover that Mistress Nutter harbours a papist priest. For the first time, Alizon lays eyes on a statue of the Virgin Mary, which influences and comforts her

for the rest of her short life. After the priest shrived old Master Nutter, he turns to Demdike, asking if she has something to confess, clearly showing his disapproval of her meddling.

The fear of Chattox and her family does not subside, when Betty, Chattox's daughter, robs them of their most precious utensils. Trying to return them, Demdike makes a deal with Chattox's half starved family to pay them a dole of oats every year so they would let them live on in peace. However, in 1601, a very harsh and fruitless summer comes upon them, together with a number of hailstorms "casting down stones big as robin's eggs." (Sharratt 145) The payment stopped, and when Alizon's father falls ill, the hunger leaving him too weak to fight it off, the blame is laid upon Chattox, who has cursed him for denying them the oats. A fight against the curse and Chattox, or so they believe, takes place in order to save John, but in the morning he lies dead in bed, leaving the family to grieve. After this loss, Liza looks for comfort in the new religion, and after some time she does in Dick Baldwin's arms. She gets pregnant and even though Demdike advises her to abort the child, for she does not want her to endure the same shame as she did bearing an illegitimate child, she keeps the baby, for "[t]he baby would love her [...], even if Baldwin despised her". (Sharratt 153) Jamie and Alizon meet their familiars, even though only Jamie embraces his powers and uses them to take revenge on people who treated him badly. When Alizon's best friend, Nancy Holden, falls ill after an encounter with Chattox, where Alizon tells her off at the Holden's house, Demdike manages to heal her at first, but after a while, Nancy dies because of her weak heart, again the blame is laid on Chattox. After a while, the neighbours and other folk in Pendle turn away from the Alizon's and Demdike's family, because they are convinced that they are hunted by bad luck, so the family is back to begging. However, Alice Nutter still helps them.

One fateful day, Alizon meets a pedlar from Halifax, John Law, and asks whether he would sell her some pins. He refuses to do so, calling her a thief and a prostitute, which results in Alizon telling him off: "The devil take you for your mean heart!" (Sharratt, 225) When her familiar troubles the pedlar as well, he starts panicking and runs away. He falls down, and is suddenly not able to speak and turns out to be lame. Even though Alizon apologises to him, for she is certain that she has bewitched him, his son reports her to the magistrate and she is arrested. Alizon, her mother and Jamie are questioned by Roger Nowell, who seems to have his way of manipulating people so they tell him exactly what he needs for prosecution. She is examined for witch marks and, some later, Demdike, Chattox and Annie are arrested as well. They are forced to walk the long way to Lancaster Castle, where their trials are to be held some months later. After being chained up in the Well-tower, Alizon has a vision of a meeting at Malkin Tower on Good Friday, some neighbours coming to have a

feast and ask about Demdike and Alizon, when Hargreaves bursts in to write down the names of the culprits. Soon afterwards, James, Liza, Mouldheels, Alice Gray, Meg Pearson, Jane and John Bulcock and Alice Nutter find themselves in the Well-tower as well. Before her questioning, Demdike dies in prison and Chattox, in an emotional moment, convinces Alizon that she indeed never cursed her father, that she only wished harm on Robert Assheton, for sexually abusing her daughter, but no one else.

In the August Assizes, the alleged witches are taken to the courtroom one by one to be put on trial, turned out to be more of a public spectacle than an actual trial. In the three days of trial, only Alice Grey and Meg Pearson are set free again, the nine others are sentenced to death executed. The most intriguing part is, that the major witness in the case is nine-year old Jennet Device. Clearly influenced by Nowell's wealth and his manipulative words, she speaks about her families familiars killing people, blasphemous prayers, clay images and a secret plot to blow up Lancaster castle, which they were said to have plotted at the meeting at Malkin Tower on Good Friday. After being condemned, Alizon has a vision of Jennet ending up as a beggar in the future, and accused of being a witch, suffering the same fate.

On her final way to the gallows, Alizon remembers her happy times in the past and regrets not having asked her familiar what her name is, thus embracing her powers, after seeing the bitch following her and protecting her from the crowd. When the hanging is over, Sharratt switches the point of view one last time, to dead Demdike's mind. She reflects on the fact that there will be no graves for them, as they were burned and their bones buried. Nowell and his men destroy Malkin Tower, but the witches will remain a part of the country and history nature forever.

In an interview about her book *Daughters of the Witching Hill*, Sharratt gives an account of the time she moved to rural Lancashire, the region of Pendle, in midwinter 2002. She lived at the foot of Pendle Hill, looking out on it through the window of her study. The hill is famous not only for being the place where George Fox had a vision in 1652, resulting in founding of the Quaker religion, but also for the incidents of the witches of Lancashire and their time. After being asked by friends about the vast amount of witch icons and symbols, Sharratt started looking into the story of the famous witches of 1612, realizing that their story removed itself from simple mythology and fairy tales, instead revealing itself as a dark testimony of the history of Lancashire. Stricken by their tale and the appearance of Elizabeth Southern, alias Demdike, one of the chief witches, historically and in the novel, she decided on writing a

novel on the subject in a new way, seen through the eyes of two of the condemned witches of Pendle, Mother Demdike and her daughter Alizon Device.³

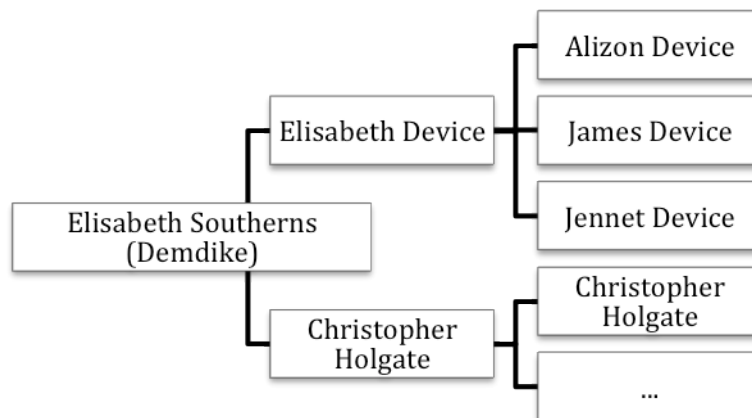
According to Sharratt, she found it very important not merely to read and research stories and manuscripts concerning the alleged witches, but also to visit and to relive their paths and to feel the impact left by them:

“History is a fluid thing that continually shapes the present. As a writer, I am obsessed with how the true stories of our ancestors haunt the land. Long after their demise, Bess and her fellow witches endure. This is their home, their seat of power, and they shall never be banished. By delving into their story, I have become an adopted daughter of their living landscape, one of many tellers who spin their unending tale.”⁴

On the back of her horse, who, according to her, made a cameo appearance in the novel as Alice Nutter’s horse, locating the foundations of Malkin Tower, home to Demdike and her family, as well as Read Hall, home of Roger Nowell, who was once the prosecuting magistrate condemning the witches.⁵

2.1. Characterization of the main characters

2.1.1. The Family of Elizabeth Southernns



2.1.1.1. Elizabeth “Bess” Southernns alias Demdike

³ http://marysharratt.com/main/?page_id=68 (7.3.2015).

⁴ https://www.bookbrowse.com/author_interviews/full/index.cfm/author_number/1863/mary-sharratt#interview (7.3.2015).

⁵ http://marysharratt.com/main/?page_id=68 (7.3.2015).

Elizabeth Southernns, who is commonly called Demdike, after a dammed stream that is close to her place of dwelling, Malkin Tower, where she lives together with her daughter and her three grandchildren. Her illegitimate son Christopher “Kit” Holgate, as well as his wife Elisabeth, called Elsie, leave the town together with their son Christopher.

As an impoverished widow, Demdike and her family can only survive through begging or work offered by the people of Pendle. When first encountering her and her facially deformed daughter, also named Elizabeth, but referred to as Liza, and her granddaughter, Alizon, the scene opens to a quarrel between the Demdike clan and a man called Richard Baldwin. It soon becomes clear that mother Demdike, despite being a woman of high age, has an intimidating aura around her. As Bess first comes into her powers at the age of fifty when she passes a stone pit in Goldshaw, she does not know what fame the cunning craft will bring her. Her familiar spirit, Tibb, appears to her and promises to teach her a number of skills to perform her work as a cunning woman. He assures her of the gift, as even her own grandfather was a horse-blessor, being accompanied by his familiar spirit, a spotted bitch. She realizes, that she, too, always had a special gift in tending to animals, but soon experiences that her gift, with the help of Tibb, expands even further. Tibb is not only her mentor and companion, but it is hinted at, that the two also have something close to a sexual relationship: “My meetings with Tibb were not unlike lovers’ trysts.” (Sharratt 53) Demdike is fascinated by his appearance as a beautiful golden-haired young man, though he can also take the shape of a hare or brown dog. Bess is claimed to be the illegitimate daughter of Roger Nowell senior, on whose farm her grandfather and her mother worked, linking her directly to the young Roger Nowell, magistrate and later demise of those accused of witchcraft. In order to silence her mother, so she does not tell about the shame of an illegitimate child, the Nowells grant her Malkin Tower, but by the time the action of the book takes place, it is hardly more than a crumbling old watchtower near Pendle Forest.

Since her youth, Demdike has been a friend of Anne Whittle, later known as Chattox, who stood by her when Demdike stood at the pillow on market place after cheating on her husband. Together they have been witnesses of the Old Religion, before it was forbidden and all the old shrines were destroyed due to the Reformation. The Latin prayers and folk charms of Catholicism, as well as herbalism, are also the basis of Demdike’s blessings. However, it seems that she does not completely belong to the Old Religion. As she and Alizon travel to Read Hall to tend to the dying Master Nutter, the papist priest shows clearly that her meddling does not belong in this milieu. The basis of her powers seems to be set in a mixture of Catholicism and pagan rituals, which will be discussed later on in this thesis.

Demdike plays a major role, not only because she is the so-called chief witch, but also because she is the narrator of a big part of the book. Later, the point of view shifts to her granddaughter Alizon, who describes her grandmother as follows:

“[...] [O]ur gran did look a frightful thing. Her coif was askew and her grey hair, thick and unruly, sprang out every which way, but most unnerving were her eyes, milky and clouded. When she aimed those eyes at you, you’d quail, for she truly *saw* folk with those cauled eyes of hers – saw what they hid inside and was never fooled by their masks of lies.” (Sharratt 156)

Her very appearance seems to be intimidating and full of power. Without a doubt, this was partly the reason why it was important for Roger Nowell to display her in the spectacle, which was said to be the trial, but she, as the only one of the accused, died in prison before she could have been questioned. It seems that Demdike, as the most powerful of the witches, also had the power to end her own life in order to escape trial.

2.1.1.2. Elizabeth “Liza” and John Device

Liza is the daughter of Elizabeth and Ned Southernns, who passed away when Demdike was 39 years old, after Liza’s birth. According to Demdike, Liza is not a bad looking woman, however, she is born with a deformation of the eye, which makes it hard for her to find work and is believed to be untrustworthy in the eyes of other people:

“If you looked at her from the side, you hardly noticed her squint, and, apart from her wayward eyes and her skinny frame, she wasn’t a bad-looking girl. Had her father’s glossy brown hair. Her neck and wrists were graceful, her bosom well-shaped [...]” (Sharratt 32)

Liza is described as a passionate and fierce woman, who does not accept her family to be threatened or harmed in any way. Still, most people in Pendle reduce her to her deformation and she is referred to as squint-eyed demon, prone to bring bad luck to any house that might give her work: “That bug-eyed slattern! [...] You let her in the house and she’s spoiled the ale!” (Sharratt 28).

Liza tries to go on the same path as Demdike did and wants to bless young Alice Nutter. Bess stops her and explains the issue concerning familiars and that she cannot use any kind of magic without a companion from the other world. Some time later, Liza finally meets her familiar, Ball, but even before that she does make use of the herbal knowledge that Demdike has taught her on several occasions, for instance, the skill to abort an illegitimate

child when times are dire. For quite some time, they work their blessings together, which is at times the only thing that saves them from perishing.

Liza later marries John Device in 1588, a farm hand, who first meets her on the day she and her mother work for the Holdens. They have two children together, Alizon and James. John is a very good-hearted man, but very superstitious. He lost his parents when he was seven years old, and it is claimed that they were not older than 25 when they died. A young person dying is often associated with witchcraft, even though the reader never finds out the real cause of their death. His fear of Chattox drives Bess and her friend further away from each other day by day, also because Liza, influenced by John's fear and mistrust, makes her swear while giving birth that she does not see her again. When John dies, believing that Chattox has cursed him because he could not pay her the oath as he usually did, Liza abandons the idea of practicing magic altogether.

In the end, Liza is one of the condemned witches to be hanged. She keeps her strong and upright posture far into her own trial but she finally breaks, when she sees that her very own daughter, Jennet, is the head-witness, calmly denouncing her whole family as witches.

2.1.1.3. Alizon Device

In the beginning of the book, Alizon is described as a beautiful 15-year old girl, "[...] dazzling as the noontide sun, so bright that she lights up the murk of my dim sight" (Sharratt 3). At first, she shows signs of being equally gifted as her grandmother, but like her mother, Liza, she becomes wary of those deeds as she witnesses her father perish from, what he is certain of, one of Chattox's curses.

After accompanying her grandmother to Alice Nutter's house to ease her husband's pains, she finds out Mistress Nutter's secret of harbouring a papist. She, too, becomes an ally of the Old Religion, and, like her grandmother, has visions of the "Queen of Elfhome", showing her three paths, one to heaven, one to hell and one in between, where she waits for her.

Her grandmother sees in Alizon her best chance of an apprentice and wants to pass on her knowledge to her but Alizon, however, refuses, as she very well knows how people are talking about her family. Still she seems to be protected by a mysterious dog, from which she knows it has to be her familiar, yet she is too frightful to ask for the creature's name and thus accept her power. Only on her way to the gallows does she regret not having embraced her gift.

She longs to lead a normal life, but when she meets a pedlar from York, one day John Law, her powers seem to take over as he refuses to open his pack and sell her some pins. As he ignores her and walks away, Alizon breaks and starts insulting him, her unaccepted familiar joining in. Feeling a rush of power in herself, she involuntarily causes him to fall to the ground lame and half of his body paralyzed, unable to speak. Some time later she is called to the Inn where the pedlar has been brought. Instead of lying and denying to have bewitched him, she begs for his forgiveness. The pedlar believes her and accepts her apology, but his son would have none of that and reports her to the magistrate. One day later, she is arrested, along with her mother and brother, and questioned by Roger Nowell, who manages to manipulate her by a story about witchcraft, into telling him about Chattox and her curses. In a moment of pride she also praises her grandmother and her blessings. Nowell then has her examined for a devil's mark and has her thrown in the cellar.

Having Alizon as one of the narrators of the book offers the reader the possibility of viewing the story not only from Demdike's point of view, but also from the view of someone who is afraid of and even sceptical when it comes to magic. She tells the story from the perspective of a young girl being thrown into a world which she never fully is able to accept and her heart-breaking thoughts during the questioning, the imprisonment and the trials, as well as the hanging.

2.1.1.4. James "Jamie" Device

Jamie is Liza's handicapped son, who seems to have taken a liking to using magic. Unlike his grandmother, Jamie is not a cunning-man, but he uses magic to hurt other people, who degrade him. He never seems to, be able to grasp in how far he endangers his family by using clay figures in his would-be practices of magic. Due to his mental handicap, he is not able to distinguish clearly between good and evil, which proves to be a dangerous threat considering that he is very gifted. After seeing Jamie bury clay images of people bothering him, Alizon tries to keep him out of trouble. She tries to get rid of the clay figures he made and talk him out of bad ideas, but this is a harder task than she has thought at first. After hearing from Baldwin that the folk of Pendle start talking about people mysteriously dying when they quarrel with their family, Alizon breaks down. When Matthew finds her, he confirms the rumours concerning Jamie especially. He advises her to bind Jamie, but she quickly rejects this idea, for it would only break him. After a talk with Alizon, who told him that he greatly endangers the ones he loves, he goes soft and promises not to practice dark magic anymore.

Jamie also plays an important role in the questioning and in the trials, since he, due to his mental handicap, is a perfect victim to Nowell's manipulative ways, who makes him confess crimes that were never actually committed. Jamie and Jennet are the two major witnesses at the trial of the witch-hunt. Shortly before the trial, Jamie falls ill with gaol fever and is hardly conscious during the hanging: "He'd already died in his soul when they first chained him at the bottom of the Well Tower." (Sharratt 322)

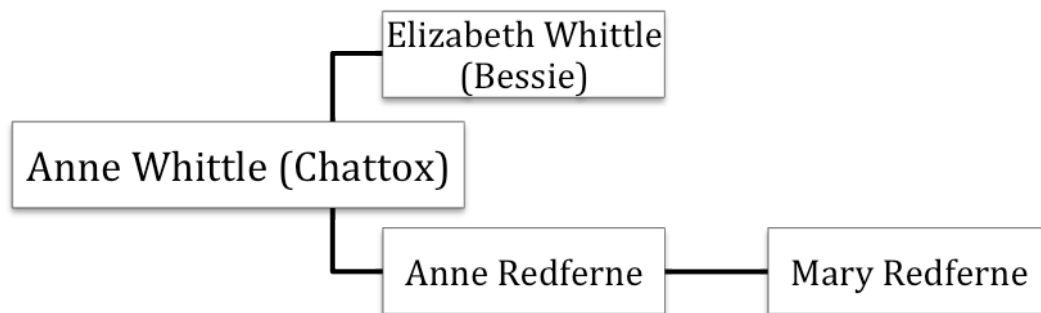
2.1.1.5. Jennet Device

Jennet is the illegitimate child of Liza and the Puritan Churchwarden Richard Baldwin. She knows very well that she is the cuckoo in the family and is rather resentful of the other members, especially those dealing with witchcraft. Baldwin does not accept her as his child. Even worse, he accuses Demdike of having killed his legitimate child.

Jennet is named after one of Liza's old friends, Jennet Preston, her last name, Device is used so she at least feels to belong in someway to the family, which was once fathered by a good-hearted man. Alizon describes her as follows: "With her mousy heir, her pinched face, her cold blue eyes, she was the very picture of [Baldwin]." (Sharratt 155)

Jennet is not interested in winning the love of her family. Quite the opposite is the case. On every possible occasion, she seems to condemn her family and taunt them about their use of magic and its after-effects. However, Jennet plays a crucial role in the trials. Alizon already saw her running around a garden with Nowell's relatives, while the rest of her family is chained up in the Well-tower. She appears in the courtroom and calmly and without any regret confirms the allegations of that hideous crimes Nowell has made up, and she even tells a few stories concerning her family and witchcraft made up by herself. In a vision, Alizon sees Jennet's future to be quite poor. She ends up as a beggar, being soon accused of being a witch herself.

2.1.2. The Family of Anne Whittle



2.1.2.1. Anne Whittle alias Chattox

Chattox is introduced as Bess's oldest and most faithful friend as well as her greatest rival, who stood by her, while she endured even the most shameful things. People call her Chattox, her maiden name being Chadwick, in order to tell her name apart from her daughter's. (see Sharratt 40)

She is described as strong-willed, knowing what she wants and taking every opportunity given to her: "Her temper was fierce enough to make a grown man whimper." (Sharratt 39) When she seeks out Demdike to help her daughter fight off the son of their landlord, Robert Assheton, who tries to rape Annie, she leaves her scepticism behind and opens her mind to the world of magic. After being introduced to the spiritual world, Anne crosses the thin line between good and evil. While she also works as a cunning woman, rumours say that she also uses a dark kind of magic and people start fearing her. Adding up to this, she has two dead husbands, one who was unfaithful and died a year after being caught by his wife. Bess tries to defend her at first against the accusations by John and the other members of the community, but when she teaches her how to save her daughter, Demdike states:

"A storm was rising in my friend, the power, raw and new, potent enough to knock me sideways. Anne was so much more than my apprentice. She had it in her to outshine me, to charge ahead where I would never dare to go. [...] I was afraid of her, [...] [m]y own Anne Whittle, who had nothing left to lose." (Sharratt 125)

Chattox, with the help of her familiar Fancy, kills the son of the landlord who tried to rape her daughter and drive them away from the cottage, their dwelling place, her reputation as a witch only grows and she cannot shake it off until her death. Demdike starts being afraid of her old

friend, as she realizes that her familiar and the black magic he enables her to practice have changed Anne. While the story carries on, Chattox's reputation changes drastically and when it is Alizon's turn to tell the story, her description of her comes as follows: "At the sight of a stooped figure staring at us, our mirth turned to terror. There she was stood, that hunched hag. That witch. [...] Her glare made my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth. Like a nightmare, it was, seeing Chattox's hateful face, her baleful eyes stabbing us." (Sharratt 169)

After this encounter, Alizon is of the opinion that Chattox not only killed her father, but also made Nancy sick, who is convinced that Chattox saw right into her heart as well. This makes it easier for Alizon to denigrate her when Nowell tells her he wanted to rid the region of Pendle from the evil that lies there, even though she promised Demdike not to accuse anybody, for this may lead to them being reported as witches too.

Shortly before the end, Chattox and Demdike put aside their animosity in the Well Tower, as Demdike apologizes to her for being her false friend, which shocked Alizon, as she, influenced by their parents' attitude, always believed that Chattox had cursed them. After Demdike's death, however, Chattox tells Alizon: "Your parents always did think the worst of me, but I swear upon your gran's body that I never cursed your father, Alizon." (Sharratt 297)

2.1.2.2. Anne "Annie" Redferne

Annie Redferne is the daughter of Chattox, one of the chief witches of the story. She first comes into contact with magic when she is harassed by young Robert Assheton, and, in an act of revenge, her mother and she kill him by a charm using clay images with the help of Demdike. Demdike provides guidance to her, as she has a vision of Annie running away from Robert and because of her loyalty to Chattox. Annie is said to be the only one at the questioning and at the trial, who does not condemn any other person. At first it seems that she is pardoned in the trial, but she is then accused of another crime. She finally meets the same end as her mother and the other accused alleged witches, the gallows.

2.1.2.3. Elisabeth "Betty" Whittle

Betty is Chattox's older daughter, who seems to be a trouble-maker right from the beginning. Her mother is afraid that she will never find a decent man who cares for her. Because of Betty, Demdike has her first truly negative experience with magic when she and Liza are helping in finding the thief of a spinning wheel. As it turns out that the thief was Betty,

Demdike takes it in her own hands to bring justice to save Betty from the magistrate, however, Chattox still feels betrayed by her. After Chattox has already begun to work her dark magic, Betty appears at Malkin Tower with a skull to mock Demdike and her family, saying: "You think you can just wash your hands of us? You made my mam what she is." (Sharratt 142) Betty does end at the gallows, like the rest of her family does, but receives a life long prison sentence and dies from gaol fever after only a view months.

2.1.3. Other characters of importance

2.1.3.1. Alice Nutter

Alice Nutter takes up a special role in the book, as she is the only person of the gentry to be accused of witchcraft and condemned in the prosecution. She is one of the few allies Demdike and her family have, ever since they helped her conceive a child by a far older husband. Both, she and her husband are followers of the Old Religion and harbour a Catholic priest in their house. When there is the danger of a Spanish invasion by King Philip II, Nowell pronounces his dislike of them, thinking that they would want the change in the regime, as it would legalize their faith again.

In times of great poverty and hunger, Alice Nutter is always one to keep Demdike and her family from starving. Throughout the novel, she is represented as a generous charitable woman, loyal to those she is befriended with and kind at heart. Even when Alizon is accused of bewitching the pedlar, she offers her honest work. When she is brought to the Well Tower as well, she still keeps her dignity, which "[...] glowed in the darkness like a candle." (Sharratt 285)

2.1.3.1. Roger Nowell

Roger Nowell is the Magistrate and Justice of Peace and High Sheriff in the area of Pendle Forest. According to Demdike, he is directly connected to their family, as she is the illegitimate child of old Master Nowell. As a bribe, so no-one would uncover this shameful incident, the Southernns were given Malkin Tower. When she sees him at the market, she describes him as "[a] handsome man, [...] with a firm chin just like mine. I looked straight at him to see of he would recognize his own blood kin. But his sharp blue eyes passed over me [...]." (Sharratt 9) Throughout most of the book, Nowell is portrayed as an intimidating, yet

kind man, however this changes when it becomes clear that he simply wants to make a name for himself as a witch-hunter and to get in favour with the King. His insidious and intimidating performance at the trial and the hideous crimes he makes the witches to confess are enough to impress the audience in the courtroom. During the trials, Alizon, recently being told by Demdike about their family relationship to Nowell, wonders, if he simply does not know about him condemning his own kin or if this is a perfect opportunity for him to get rid of the tainted branch on his family tree.

2.2. Comparison of the characters in the novel with the historical figures

The major characters, as well as the events described in the novel are based on the book *The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster*, written by Thomas Potts and published in 1613, shortly after the Pendle witch trials. Potts was one of the clerks in the court and wrote his book as a warning to the public, not to engage in witchcraft and to curb the activities of witches. It is a pamphlet of anti-witchcraft propaganda, to show that authorities were successful in handling a witch-plague in Lancashire. This book is the only surviving document to tell the story of the witch-trial, as legal documents do not exist anymore (cf. Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 1).

Demdike was, in the description of Potts, “[...] a very old woman, about the age of four-score years, and had been a witch for fifty years.” (qtd. in Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 101). Sharratt states, “[...] if the trial scripts can be believed –[...] she freely confessed to being a charmer and a healer. Local farmers called on her to cure their children and their cattle. She described in rich detail how she first met her familiar spirit, Tibb.” (Sharratt 330) Demdike is said to be the one to have influenced the others to offer the soul to the Devil, or to demonic spirits. After her death in the Well Tower, Chattox, described as her aged neighbour and long-time rival, tried to save herself by putting the blame on Demdike, admitted however, when she heard her own confessions of April and May and confessed to all charges, begging to spare her daughter Anne Redferne. (cf. Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 33-34). Quite close to the description offered by Sharratt, Potts describes Chattox as “a very old withered spent & decrepit creature, her sight almost gone ... Her lips ever chattering and walking: but no man knew what” (qtd. in Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 34).

Like Chattox, Liza is portrayed realistically. Going into great detail, Potts made a big spectacle about the deformation of her eyes, which was hardly ever seen before. Like in the novel, Liza is described as strong, even as her confession in late April was read out to her,

where her strength had shortly been broken. When Jennet was giving evidence at court, Liza had to be removed, for she cried out to her daughter, who in response refused to speak as long as her wailing mother was present. After being brought back to court, her strength had again faltered and she begged for mercy. According to Potts, she was, together with old, wicked Demdike there to assist her, and additionally her very own children Alizon and James, themselves followed by familiar spirits, one of the most dangerous witches to be found in the region of Pendle (cf. in Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 123-127).

James Device did not seem to be able to defend himself, as he was in a very sorry state when the trial against him began. According to Potts, James may have tried to escape his trial by trying to end his own life (cf. Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 34).

Alizon Device, confronted with the pedlar, whom she had allegedly lamed, wept and asked to be heard by the court. Confronted with the pedlar, she begged him for forgiveness and openly confessed her crime (cf. in Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 184).

When it comes to the case of Alice Nutter, Potts seemed to be rather unsure of why a woman of such wealth and social standing would become a witch, or what the Devil could offer her, as she already had money, land and children with good hope. Even after hearing what she was accused of and the evidence brought against her, Alice Nutter pledged to be innocent. Jennet Device was asked to pick her out of a crowd of other prisoners and strange women and was confronted with a trap-question, which she could pass, and was able to identify Alice Nutter and indicate the place, where she sat at the feast at Malkin Tower and what magic she meddled in (cf. in Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 169-173).

According to Boswell in her documentary *The Pendle Witch Child*, nine-year-old Jennet Device, the major witness, met her destiny in the trials of 1633/34, when another child witness, ten-year-old Edmund Robinson, accused her and a number of others to be witches. As it turned out, he lied, making up the story of a great witch feast at a tower out of fragments of what he heard about the trial of 1612. Until the time of his confession, three supposed witches had already died in prison. As the name of Jennet Device was not documented anywhere else, it is very likely that she could not pay for her time in prison, as was common at that time, and thus she never made it out of prison. (see Boswell)

It should be mentioned that Sharratt took some fictional liberties concerning the characters in the book. There is no historic evidence about Demdike's relation to Nowell as her half-brother. It is however assumed that she must have been the offspring of some influential family, or else she probably would not have been allowed to dwell in Malkin Tower together

with her family. Furthermore, there is no clear evidence that Roughlee Hall really was the home of Alice Nutter. Some sources state that it might have been Crow Trees Farm near Roughlee. All spells and charms used in the book were either taken from records of the confessions of the alleged witches, Jennet Device's memory, reciprocated in the trials from Lancashire folklore.

Concerning the characters, Robert Assheton, killed by Chattox and Annie in the book, is based on some Robert Nutter of Greenhead. Anthony Holden is a composition of John Nutter of Bull Hole Farm, also mentioned in the trials, and his brother Anthony. Nancy, Alizon's best friend, was actually called Anne and is the daughter of Anthony Nutter. Sharratt states that she changed the names to present the reader from being confused by too many characters named Nutter. Henry Bulcock in the novel is based on Henry Bulcock, who was of the opinion that Alizon bewitched him, and Christopher Bulcock, husband of the accused Jane Bulcock (cf, Sharratt 331-332).

3. Elaborations of relevant terms

3.1. *Witch, Sorcerer and Cunning-folk*

The terminology concerning *witch* has been the centre of many debates by scholars. Some are even of the opinion that a clear distinction between terminology and etymology is hardly worth considering, as many words, such as witch, sorcerer, necromancer, are nothing else than synonyms and every form of distinction are simply misleading. (see, Summers 13f) Still, it is necessary to define the concept, especially as it is used in early modern England, the time most relevant for this thesis, a detailed enquiry on the issue of what “being a witch” actually means needs to be provided. The word witch, popularly used to refer to females, actually derives from Old English *wicca*, meaning: “A man, who practises witchcraft or magic; a magician, sorcerer, wizard”, so clearly being a masculine word. (Summers 14)

The view of the witch changes in different historical concepts, so one could never give a clear definition of a witch without including the historical, social and religious context. Broadly speaking, a witch can be considered “[...] a person who possesses a supernatural, occult, or mysterious power to cause misfortune or injury to others.” (Levack *Witchcraft Sourcebook* 2) Guiley mentions further characteristics, namely participating in rituals, charms, spells and the ability to invoke spirits, as well as being able to manipulate cosmic forces. In her definition, however, the witch does not necessarily have malicious intentions. Also the concept of the female witch developed in Western culture. (see Guiley 376)

For some scholars there seems to be a clear distinction at least between the terms *witch*, *sorcerer* and *cunning-woman/man*, the main distinguishing feature being the differentiation between beneficent magic and maleficent magic. Horsley describes a wise woman or cunning folk “[...] (a) practitioner of beneficent magic [...] called variously a wise woman, a cunning man, wizard, conjuror, white witch, [...] a diviner and healer” (697). This type of magic includes for instance divination, finding of lost objects, healing, enchantments, love magic, protective magic, midwifery and the disclosure of thieves. However, there is a kind of overlap, as magic turns out to be quite ambiguous, depending on the beholder. In between white and black magic, there seems to be an area that fits more to the category of grey magic. Looking at the example of Love magic, which need not necessarily be benevolent. While it could benefit one person, it may very well have a more damaging

outcome for the other. Furthermore, Horsley argues that “[...] some peasants would conjure the storms or weather spirits to avoid striking their own fields – but to strike someone else’s instead.” (698) Concluding, not only the terms “witch” and “cunning-folk” need to be distinguished, but also that in between a person working “grey magic”, who in Horsley’s study is referred to as a “sorcerer”, but it seems that the role of sorcerers in trials was near to non-existent. (see Horsley 696-701)

To claim that accusations concerning witchcraft were merely an outcome of pure superstition of the uneducated masses would be a big mistake. In truth, most witch-hunters were well educated. According to Levack (1987), many educated Europeans believed that witches made a face-to-face pact with the Devil, enabling them to practice not only black, harmful magic, but also a number of other diabolic activities. The Devil would offer the soon-to-be witch wealth, power or sexual pleasure and if they accept, an official ritual takes place in which the witch clearly shows that she rejects the Christian faith, for instance by stepping on or destroying a cross, and would afterwards show her loyalty to the Devil by either bowing to him backwards or kissing his buttocks. The Devil in turn then puts a distinct sign on the witch, also known as witch’s mark or devil’s mark. From this moment on, the witches would come together in large gatherings, dancing naked around the fire, sacrificing children on the bodies of whom they would then feast and have sexual intercourse with the Devil, subordinate demons and the other witches. In order to be able to attend such meetings regularly, the Devil gives witches the ability to fly. The fears of a witch’s intercourse with the Devil were not shared among all classes of society. While the gentry and theologians felt appalled by the blasphemous acting, the peasants were more concerned by the power of a witch, magic given by the Devil, to harm them in any way. Not being able to read and often not even understand the theories of the before mentioned, it was not hard for peasants to believe that poor people would consider offering themselves to the Devil in exchange of wealth power and sexual pleasure. For the church and clergy, however, the deed of causing maleficent magic was not enough for a wide-ranging prosecution, but it was important, that the witches reject the Christian faith as a whole. (see Levack *Witch-hunt* 30f) In one of his later studies, Levack concludes that a witch in the context of early modern England “[...] was both a harmful magician and a worshipper of the Devil, and the pact was the means by which the two forms of activity were most clearly related.” (Levack *Witch-hunt* 37)

When the term witch is used today, it conjures up the picture of an evil, old hag,

walking crookbacked and ugly, often warts on her huge nose and chin, trying to bewitch and harm adults as well as children. The meaning associated with the term witch has had a different and more frightening ring to it in the past, but still it evokes a sense of fear. Widdowson argues that witches seem to have existed from the beginning of human history, in one form or another, very often embodying human fear. Fear is something that every human being of any level of society possesses, be it a fear of another person, an animal, catastrophes, injuries, diseases or death. One of the most typical fears is that of the unknown and things and of things that human kind cannot even be sure exist. Beings embodying fears, be it human or animal, supernatural or natural, seem to share a set of characteristics. At some point, they seem abnormal, the witch especially exhibiting the most unpleasant human characteristics. Widdowson describes those characteristics in the following way: “They often dress in dark, dirty, ragged clothes. They may mutter to themselves or display other signs of abnormal or antisocial behaviour.” (Widdowson 202) Being a white witch, using beneficial magic, could not save these people from a similar description and the simple fact that they were able to use any kind of magic, be it curing or divination, resulted in them being considered suspicious. However, traditional concepts of the witch seem to emphasize the malevolence, distinguishing witches at some point from their more or less harmless counterparts. This malevolence becomes manifest in their spell casting, bewitching, the use of the evil eye and using other harmful magic to wreak havoc. (see Widdowson 200-204)

3.1.1. The Devil’s mark and “Pricking”

This mark can be described as “[...] an extra teat or nipple on witches for sucking [familiars] and [imps], who were said to crave for human [blood].” (Guiley 381)

In order to uncover a witch in an examination, the search for a devil’s mark was often considered to be an effective means of identification in 17th century. The procedure was to pierce the mark with a needle or other equipment, if it did not bleed or if the person did not feel pain, it was considered very likely that he/she was a witch. Different countries had different theories concerning the origin of the mark. In America and England, it was considered to be an extra nipple to nurture the “witch’s familiar”, comparable to the myth of vampirism, in which vampires take control over their victim’s soul by draining their blood. In Scotland, the mark was considered a sign for the pact between a witch and the Devil, the sign being given by the Devil himself, usually at a witches’ Sabbath. (see McDonald 507-511)

There are several possibilities of what the mark could have been. It was often

described as hard and horny, brown, red or blue in colour, either flushing with the skin surface or depressing. Many lesions can fit that description. Some resembled teats or supernumerary nipples. Another possible explanation is a tattoo, usually given in pagan rituals. A lot of different cultures all over the world practised tattooing throughout time, Christianity however forbade and condemned it. (see McDonald 507-511)

Some “prickers” hunting witches in Scotland of the 17th century were clergymen. Soon, however, a business developed and professional pricking was considered an occupation with a good salary. Pricking later was exposed to be based on deceit, many women were falsely condemned, treated very cruelly, sometimes even tortured and severely injured. Prickers were imprisoned if they were discovered cheating, for instance not really pricking the person or using a manipulated retractable needle. (see McDonald 507-511)

Another possible explanation of the origin of Devil’s mark, as seen from a psychiatrist’s perspective, could be hysteria, even though it is highly unlikely that all convicted were hysterics. It is, however, rather likely that the victim was very tense and afraid during the examination, probably not really feeling the pain due to stress. Furthermore, many of the accused were members of the lower classes, meaning they probably suffered from malnutrition and disorders, syphilis or vitamin B deficiency, which lowers the awareness of pain. Being used to hard physical work could have resulted in the body simply being immune to it as well. It was thus also not hard for a pricker to find a piece of skin, which was not at all sensitive to pain, for instance, warts or scars. Finally, some suspected witches may have reacted to the pricking simply to shorten the procedure, being afraid that the examination would continue until the prickers found what they were looking for. (see McDonald 507-511)

3.2. *Witchcraft*

As Guiley mentions, “[...] [b]elief in witchcraft is universal, but there is no universal definition of “witchcraft.” It has both positive and negative connotations“. (Guiley 366)

However, many scholars agree that witchcraft played a crucial role in societies that faced some sort of misfortune. This is a phenomenon, which was witnessed at any time and place all over the world. George Clement Bond and Diane M. Ciekawy stated in *Witchcraft Dialogues* (qtd. In Behringer 11): “The search for explanations of misfortunes and attempts to govern human affairs through occult forces are part of the human condition and know no time and place.”

According to Macfarlane, witchcraft “[...] may be defined as supernatural activity, believed to be the result of power given by the Devil, and causing physical damage, for instance death.” (72) Modern witchcraft has, for the most part, lost its negative connotation. There are a number of people describing themselves as witches, using modern “charms” and “spells” in order to support their lives. An author of a number of such guidebooks, Lady Sabrina, defines witchcraft as: “[...] employ[ing] the power of nature to create a charm, philtre, potion or spell to bring about the desired change.” (Lady Sabrina 16)

3.2.1. Christian Charms

During the reign of Elizabeth I, the distinction between white and black magic was no longer maintained, but all kinds of magic were considered to be the result of a pact with the Devil. The medieval church, however, “[...] had worked “ecclesiastical magic” by using holy water and salt for exorcism and bell-ringing to lay storms, [...] [o]ccult formulae supplemented by the recitation of Christian prayers for the restoration of health in man or beast also remained a familiar feature of the period.” (Tyler 86) This offered the language and symbols of Christianity to play a major role in a number of spells, charms and curses. Especially Latin prayers, for instance the *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria* and the *Creed* were said to be particularly effective, and thus were sufficient to function as reason for a person to be accused of witchcraft. (see, Rushton 115) One of the Lancashire witches, who were accused in 1612, was said to be especially gifted using the following charm against allegedly bewitched drinks, written down by Potts in his *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches*:

Father Sonne and Holy Ghost,
A Gods name,
Five Pater nosters, Five avies
And a Creede,
In worship of five wounds of
Our Lord
(qtd. In Rushton 115)

Charms like these were part of the evidence that the accused witch was guilty. A popular way of concluding a charm was the use of the word “fiat”, meaning “let it be done”. (see Cobban 80)

In order of overruling other religions and believes, the Christian church often adds foreign customs into their repertoire. In order to prevent pagan prayers and blessings to survive, the church claimed it to be acceptable to use Christian prayers to take their place and

to enhance effectiveness of herbs and medicine. Later, such prayers started to be used as an universal shield against all kinds of magic. (see Guiley 272)

3.2.2. Image Magic

An important part of magic is the use of pictures or images, which has been practiced all over the world at any time in history. The crucial point concerning picture magic is the assumption that there is a close relationship between a thing itself and material resembling it, and that this relatedness makes it possible to harm someone or something by destroying the picture. Usually, wax, clay or wood was used in order to form images of the intended victim of witchcraft. However there are reported cases of other material being used. Picture magic was not always used for harmful deeds, it could for instance cure illnesses, help women bear children, end quarrels and induce love, as it also could cause pains, insanity, impotence and many other forms of misery. What made the use of picture magic so popular was that it was an easy task to do. No professional witches were needed in order to perform the charm, but simple people only needed a good portion of hatred to do the task. There are different kinds of severity of the damage intended as well as different ways of how fast the charm should become effective. If one wanted to kill a hated person slowly, a picture made of clay could be put under a running stream, so it would waste away slowly, to induce lameness, pain or craziness, the picture could be crumbled slowly or pins were run through the joints or head of the image. In order to be able to work this kind of magic, the person performing the spell had to go to church, and say a number of prayers with his/her back to the altar. If the picture is buried, it has to be buried in the name of the Devil and, if possible, near the house of the victim. When burying it in wet soil, the death was a quick one, in dry soil the victim would have to suffer for some time, depending on how far it takes for the picture to waste away. (see, Hole 80-83)

3.2.3. Witchcraft vs. Magic

Levack (2004) distinguishes between witchcraft and magic. Even though a witch is considered a kind of magician, her magical deeds have nothing to do with people summoning up demons in order to gain wealth and power. Those ritual magicians were sometimes prosecuted, their trials however ended rarely with an execution. This type of magician, often educated men, use spells and charms in order to summon up spirits or even the Devil himself, while the witch is usually associated with much simpler magic, being a servant of the Devil. However, the crimes of witches were considered much more severe than those of ritual

magicians, but by the end of the 15th century, the magician had turned into the witch. (see, Levack *Witchcraft Sourcebook* 32)

3.2.4. Familiars

Albeit the witch is seen as a servant of the Devil, she is believed to be given a servant herself, who makes it possible for the witch to work her magic, or who could even do the deed for her. In early modern illustrations, witches are often displayed with some sort of animal, in the majority of cases the animal is a black cat, bat, mouse, hare, snake, hound, frog, bird, bear, raven or a black horse. The concept of a spirit being able to inhabit the body of an animal or other creature has its roots in ancient lore. It can be found in Paleolithic and Neolithic concepts, as well as shamanic practices, in which animal guides are often necessary in performing a ritual. Very often, familiar spirits are said to be creatures of nature, connected to woodlands, wetlands and caves. Scholars believe that the concept of familiars arose out of the need to communicate with the world of spirits and that the idea of a familiar as an ally evolved later. Only in the context of Christianity was the familiar seen as a servant given to the witch by the Devil, aiding the witch in her harmful magic. Very often, familiars were believed to have originated from trolls, kobolds or fairies, keeping up a steady link to Pre-Christian pagan beliefs. The witch did not give the names to her familiar herself as it was believed that the usually peculiar names could not be given by any human being. Furthermore, these familiars were believed to transport witches to their meeting places, or Sabbath, or to the Fairy realm, where they would occasionally hold their Sabbaths in order to avoid being detected. (see, Grimassi 1- 13)

3.3. The Witch-hunts and the European witch-craze of the 16th and 17th century

Witches and witchcraft are part of a great number of cultures and societies all over the world. However, Christian beliefs in Europe and America considered witchcraft as heresy, which sparked off the witch-craze in the 16th century, leading up to a total number of 60,000 to 200,000 condemned people. Levack (1987) estimates that about 100,000 alleged witches were officially tried, and 50,000 unlucky souls executed.

3.3.1. History of Witch-Persecution

As stated in the study by Behringer, witch persecution does not begin in Early Modern Europe and America, even though it seems to be the first thing to come up when speaking about witch

persecution. Documents concerning the punishment of witches go farther back in history. King Hammurapi (1792-1750 BC) of Mesopotamia was known to have formulated a law, which stated that in all cases of assumed witchcraft in which the case could not be solved through the statements of witnesses, the accused was to be tested by a swimming test. If this method fails, the accused was to face the punishment of the accuser, which, in witchcraft-cases, meant death. There are many more examples throughout the Ancient Middle East, however, the most common practice when dealing with witchcraft was the death penalty. King Esarhaddon (680-669 BC) rule compiled a text dealing with the fight against witchcraft, titled *Maqlu*, which translates as “burning”. The *Divine Law*, which is believed to have been written down by Moses around 1250 BC, states clear rules as to how witches, diviners and prophets had to be killed. These rules of the ancient Jews can still be found in parts of the Bible. Further instances of witch-persecutions can be found among the Scythians, nomadic people from Central Asia, reported by Herodotus (490-425) and by Ancient Greek. The awareness of witchcraft in the Roman Empire is evident. Lucius Cornelius Sulla (138-78 BC) promulgated the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis*, in which *veneficium*, *maleficium* and divination were equal to treatise. Anyone consulting any person using sorcery was treated as an ally and trialled to be put to death. Following this, the witch-horror lasted for a long time in the Roman Empire, especially during the reigns of Valentinian I (321-75), who was especially relentless. There are records of cases of witch-prosecution throughout Africa, South America and different European colonies, however, the focus of this thesis is on Europe and, more specifically, England. A large number of cases from the Middle Ages show that the usage of magic, whether black or white, was punished severely, which often resulted in witch-panics. During the 14th ad 15th century, large numbers of witch-hunts can be found in France as well as Switzerland, in the following century also in Germany.(see, Behringer 47-67)

The subject of witchcraft has, from the middle of the 13th century up to the 18th century, so far not yet been examined in great detail by scholars. Whatever source there is are documents of the trials, pamphlets by eye-witnesses, and the writings of the inquisitors themselves. In the 16th and 17th centuries England experienced a number of socio-economic changes: the population doubled, food became rare and expensive and well-paid work was nearly impossible to find. As a result, a big part of the population fell victim to poverty, which created a gap between rich and poor, which was evident in rural areas. The phenomenon of witchcraft spread widely in parts of the country, as well as amongst the poorer citizens. It often happened that rich villagers accused their poorer neighbours, who had

lived for most or all of their lives in the community, most often the wives of simple labourers, who were believed to engage in witchcraft. (see, Sharpe 35-37)

Witchcraft prosecutions in England were not as severe and widespread as they were in other European countries. Between the first witchcraft statute in 1542 and the repeal of the 1604 statute in 1736 about 1500 people were actually executed. The Lancashire trials of 1612 and 1633/34 were some of the largest and best documented trials in English history. As torture was prohibited during trial, there were not as many confessions of diabolical deeds than in most other countries and therefore the fear of diabolical witch-beliefs did not expand as much. (see, Levack *Witchcraft in England*, ix-x) Documents show that different cultures and societies had different *patterns of witch-hunting*. Behringer distinguishes between different categories:

“[W]itch trials with up to three executions [...], *panic trials* with 4-19 victims [...], *large-scale witch-hunts* with 20-99 executions, *major persecutions* with 100-249 executions [...] and, as a last category, *massive witch-hunts* with more than 250 victims with less than five years in one territory, or a cluster of neighbouring small countries or territories, as a marker of absolutely extraordinary events.” (49)

One witch in particular seems to have had quite a lot of influence in later witchcraft prosecutions: the “Witch of Endor”. During the time in which witch-hunts flourished, clerics and demonologists, such as King James I, used to cite texts from the Bible in order to authorize their methods and their hunts. One famous quote, also found in the King James Bible, was taken from *Exodus 22:18*: “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”. Furthermore, the stories of the witch of Endor in the first book of Samuel gained great popularity in the Middle Ages, even though there was a lot of scepticism concerning the story, as Saul, together with the witch, conjured up the ghost of Samuel in order to seek his help. Was Saul guilty of being a necromancer? This was further elaborated by James VI in his *Demonology* (1547), in which he argues that Samuel must have been a witch, for the Devil would only allow his creatures to appear, but due to the fact that he was already dead, he could not be accused of witchcraft. (see, Levack *Witchcraft Sourcebook* 7) However, in the original language of the biblical text there is no indication of the woman being a witch. She is referred to as *ba'alath ob*, which translates “mistress of the Ob”. Later, the Latin translation *mulierem habentem pythonem* was found, meaning “a woman possessing an oracle spirit”, which was translated by King James as “possessing a familiar spirit”. The Bible, more precisely the *Book of Leviticus 20:27*, has a clear penalty of how to treat such people: “A man or a woman who acts as a medium or

fortuneteller shall be put to death by stoning.” King James adapted the Jews’ view by using the word “witch” instead of “fortuneteller”. (see, Grimassi 7f)

3.3.2. Witchcraft in the law court: Information, Examination and Indictments

When a witchcraft-case was brought forward in order to be examined, the first step to take is the accusing of a suspect by a victim. In order to do so, the victim has to give a statement, called an *information*, to the Justice of Peace, the Magistrate, concerning the case and the accusation. If the victim was a child, sick or dead, information could be given in the account of the victim. The magistrate now had to question the suspect in an *examination*, writing down everything that the person has to say. Sometimes it was also referred to as “confession”. Afterwards the suspect, when accused of having committed a serious crime by the use of witchcraft, was taken to trial at the Assizes, the criminal court. An indictment against the accused was drafted. The case would then be handed over to the Quarter Sessions, which were magistrates dealing with minor crimes, and decided, if the case was a serious one or not. If so, it would be handed over to the Assizes. Sometimes, the case went straight to the Assizes. If they found it to be insignificant, the indictment would be marked as *ignoramus* and dismissed. If the case was considered serious, the indictment would be answered *bella vera* (true bill), meaning it was passed to the court where one or, ideally, two eminent judges would be present, as well as a jury of twelve men. After listening to the statements of both parties, the accused was, found guilty or innocent rather quickly. Usually, the indictments, in which the verdict was recorded, were the only documents to survive the trial, as all pre-trial documents were usually discarded after the judgement. There are, of course some exceptions, namely records taken by people joining the trials, which were later published in pamphlets. (see, Gibson 9)

3.3.3. The three statutes in England

The first witchcraft statute to be passed in England was active during the years 1542 to 1547. In 1563, this Act was replaced by the Elizabethan statute, making it possible to punish people with death after dealing with evil spirits and using witchcraft, sorcery and other uses of magic in order to kill people. If a person was to be harmed, or the property of someone, the accused was imprisoned for one year and had to appear in the pillory for the first offence, and was sentenced to death for the second. In 1604, this Act was again replaced by a new Act, being even more severe than the other one, and remained in force until 1736:

“There invocation of spirits was elaborated, dead bodies were not to be taken out of their graves for witchcraft; injuring a person or his property was now punishable by death for the first offence instead of the second; intending to hurt or destroy people or property was punishable ‘although the same be not effected and done’.” (Macfarlane 73)

As witchcraft was considered a special type of crime, being secretive and nearly impossible to be proven, the rules of evidence had to be changed. Normal witches were usually hanged, except when they were a master or husband, which meant they were accused of “petty treason”, in this case the punishment was by “burning”. In witchcraft cases, mere suspicion was enough to accuse a person. A child was also accepted as a justified witness. Accusations did not require evidence of the culprit’s presence at the scene of crime. They could also refer to incidents that took place several years ago. Typical reasons for accusations were: “accusation by another witch; an unnatural mark on the body of the accused, supposedly caused by the Devil or a familiar; [...] two witnesses to the pact with the Devil or [...] [entertaining] the small familiars sent by him.” (Macfarlane 73) (see, Mcfarlane 72-73)

4. Historical Background

4.1. *Political and religious situation*

4.1.1. Reign of Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603)

The reign of Elizabeth I marks an important part in English history. During her time as a princess, Elizabeth lived in constant danger under the reign of her Catholic half-sister Mary I (r.1553-1558). Mary I reinforced the supremacy of the pope, as well as the old heresy laws, equalizing heresy to treason, resulting in 300 Protestants being burned, gaining her the nickname Bloody Mary⁶. After a childless marriage with Philip of Spain, not providing England with a Catholic heir, Mary died and Elizabeth started her reign. Under Elizabeth, England turned into a Protestant nation. Her reign played an important role for Protestants all over Europe, as Elizabeth was pressured greatly to aid them. However, she had small interest in leading her country to war, but she could not avoid being dragged into war with Catholic Spain. She defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588, as Philip II tried to conquer England in order to end the fight over the control of trade with the New World⁷. Her reign also marked the time when witch-hunts became rather popular.

4.1.2. Reign of James I (r.1603 - 1625)

Another monarch of importance for modern English witchcraft is James Stuart, also known as James I and James VI of Scotland. Tyson describes him, in his book *The Demonology of King James I*, as “[p]hysically [...] weak and sickly, a misfortune of health that played a significant part in his tendency in later life to achieve his purposes by manipulation and deceit rather than the bold exercise of power.” (1)

He was a strictly raised Protestant, very ambitious in succeeding Elizabeth I on the throne of England, which was successful in March 1603⁸. The trial of the North Berwick witches was very influential for the King’s thinking, as he witnessed the confessions the witches had given under torture. One of them testified the king to be the chief opponent of Satan, making James believe that he was the avenging knight of the Christian faith. He wrote the famous book *Demonology*, which was printed in 1597, where James demonized the Catholic faith.

⁶<http://www.royal.gov.uk/historyofthemonarchy/kingsandqueensofengland/thetudors/maryi.aspx> (6.4.2015)

⁷ <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/elizabeth.htm> (6.4.2015).

⁸ [http://www.royal.gov.uk/HistoryoftheMonarchy/Scottish%20Monarchs\(400ad-1603\)/TheStewarts/JamesVIandI.aspx](http://www.royal.gov.uk/HistoryoftheMonarchy/Scottish%20Monarchs(400ad-1603)/TheStewarts/JamesVIandI.aspx) (6.4.2015).

Witchcraft and Catholicism became the leading threatening forces during his reign. He also did not believe in “natural magic”, all magic came from Satan. If herbs did not carry their healing properties in their composition, their use for healing was not seen as “white magic” but a trick by Satan. During his extensive study of works concerning witchcraft and demonology, it can be assumed that James gathered a rather impressive amount of knowledge in these areas. His book however, does not present any knowledge of the procedures of rituals, it is more used as a means of prosecution, in order to encourage the fight against witchcraft in Scotland and England. In 1563, he abolished the old witchcraft statute, which was active during the reign of Elizabeth I, and renewed it, including more severe punishment for the condemned. (see Tyson 1-6)

The differences in the laws in the different reigns can be found in punishment. While in Elizabethan times witchcraft was punished if it was used in order to physically harm or kill anyone, the new law under James I penalized the mere use of magic, its source being the Devil himself, no matter if it was used for good or evil purposes. Minor deeds, like divination, finding stolen or lost objects, producing love potions, harming cattle or crops were still punished by a year in prison. The raising of spirits or familiars was punished by death penalty, a mark on the body, claimed to be a devil’s mark, and was often enough evidence. The usual way of punishment in this case was hanging in England and burning in Scotland, although the witch was usually strangled before burning to decrease suffering, but only in case the witch confessed her crime. However, James did not simply hang or burn witches on the basis of speculation. As the years of his reign passed, James became more and more aware of the fact that some accusations by some witnesses were proven to be false. Due to this scepticism, only 50 people were officially executed in England during James’s reign, but many more were tried and examined. (see Tyson 6-10)

4.1.2.1. The Demonology and The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster

According to Poole (2002), Potts book, *The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster*, is constructed around James’s *Demonology*, in order to confirm it. The way in which Thomas Potts describes the witches in his book is influenced by the conception of the witch by King James. First of all, he spoke of them as servants of Satan. Second, the law officers must have read the *Demonology* “[...] with inside knowledge of James’s concerns and policies in 1612, and artfully fashioned both the witches and the judicial process to fit them.” (Poole, *Histories and Stories*, 27)

Further parallels can be found between the trials as described by Potts. First, it was important for James to be sceptical in order not to make wrong accusations. In the case of Alice Nutter, Potts emphasizes how hard the judge tried to discover a fraud on the side of Jennet Device. When it came to accusing Alice Nutter, he tried to test Jennet, asking her about a made-up name, but she dodged. Still, she was very persistent in knowing Mistress Nutter, being able to tell where she sat at the meeting at Malkin Tower. (see Poole, *Histories and Stories* 33)

The second parallel found between the two books is the three stages at which Satan ensnares his victims. Three stages are described, the first being that the Devil makes himself known to the witch, for instance by a voice. Second, he leaves his mark upon her and last he begins to satisfy her needs. Even though Pendle beliefs hardly include diabolism, some of the confessions resembled this pattern very closely. (see Poole, *Histories and Stories* 33)

A third parallel can be found in the Sabbath. James put much effort into describing these meetings. He states that only a witch can testify who attends a Sabbath and if they are another witch, even though she might be an unreliable source. Potts speaks about the meeting at Malkin Tower, as well as an archetypal satanic black mass. The Samlesbury witches were said to have attended, including ritual murder, cannibalism on a baby and sexual abuse by Satan. He highlights in his book what demons and witches, with the help of the familiar, are able to do. (see Poole, *Histories and Stories* 33-34)

The fourth parallel refers to the widespread technique of image magic. The case of the Pendle witches offers a great number of instances of the use of clay-pictures. The Samlesbury witches did not seem keen on the use of such images, however, another issue described by James can be found in the accusation of Jennet Preston. It is said that when she touched the corpse of a victim it began to bleed fresh blood, at this time that was evidence that cannot be dismissed. (see Poole, *Histories and Stories* 34)

4.2. Society at the times of witch prosecution in early 17th century England

When conjuring up the picture of a witch, the main characteristics most people would describe it as a female that is old and ugly, often in ragged clothes. Scholars have found links between the persecutions of so-called witches and “agism” (Ruether 291), as well as sexism. (see Ruether 291)

When having a look at documents of witch-persecution it becomes clear that a large number of condemned, or persons tried, were not only women, but rather old. According to

Bever, the number of suspects over 50 takes up between half and three quarters of all the accused. Considering that this only made up about 20 per cent of the population in early modern Europe proves to be a strong argument. (see Bever 156-157) As a result of the troublesome political and religious changes, society was bound to change as well. A tension seemed to grow between the generations. Unlike their male counterparts, many old women lost their role in society, as far as they were able to fulfil one, as soon as their husbands died or they became too old to work properly. When a male reached a higher age, it was well possible for him to maintain an active part in society. Was he to be a widower, the age of 50 was still considered a good match in marriage, especially if he was a man of some account. Women who have come of age often depended on the help of their neighbours and other villagers, often even demanding it. When the better-off, younger villagers refused to help, a conflict was bound to grow between them and the poor old woman. Some would walk away murmuring and cursing under their breath, which makes it easier for villagers to get rid of this burden once the time arose. (see Bever 164-179) However, it seems that this last statement proves to be right at the time of the 17th century witch-trials. Often people brought their accusation forward in response to witch trials or to the prodding of authorities. Otherwise most peasants tolerated their neighbours, even if they suspected them of witchcraft, avoid or sometimes even look after them because of fear of their possible powers. Once it came to the time of excessive witch-prosecution, accusations turned into an effective tool of social control. (see Horsley 713-714)

Considering that gender plays a major role when it comes to witch-trials, both Bever and Ruether argue that documents as old as the bible already bear witness to the weakness of women. As stated in the book of Genesis, the first woman was created from a defect, bent rib of Adam's (see Bever 152), and the story of the Fall presents the female to be unable to resist the serpent's temptation. Hence women have been considered prone to falling victim to diabolic temptation. (see Ruether 291-292) A typical sign for her inferiority and her uncleanness was seen in the menstruation. Women were often isolated during that time and forbidden to receive Holy Communion or even to enter the church. (see Horsley 713)

Many preachers claimed that "[...] the female sex was the source of the temptations that kept men from achieving purity." (Garrett 464) Due to their weakness in mind and in body, young women are allegedly tempted by the Devil because of their insatiable lust, while older generations are more concerned with materialistic values and power, especially after having already lost possessions, resulting in a state of poverty. (see Bever 152)

4.3. The case of the Lancashire Witches

The case of the Lancashire Witches is one of the best-documented ones in English history. This most famous trial took a prominent place in English legal history. The records of Thomas Potts, clerk at the law court of the trial, are the most detailed ones in the 17th century. Twenty people were imprisoned and nineteen survived to be tried at Lancaster castle. Most of the alleged witches were from the area around Pendle Forest, some also came from Clitheroe, Padiham, Samlesbury and Windle. One of the twenty, Elizabeth Southern, also known as Demdike, died in prison before trial, three people were found not guilty, ten were found guilty and hanged and five were acquitted. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 1)

4.3.1. The Samlesbury witches

The group of the Samlesbury witches, tried on 19th August 1612, consisted of Elizabeth Astley, Alice Gray, Lawrence Hay, John Ramsden, Isabel Sidegraves, Jennet Bierley, Ellen Bierley and Jane Southworth. However, Potts merely writes about the last three, who were accused of using witchcraft, enchantments, charms and sorcery, the main witness being fourteen-year-old Grace Sowerbutts, another child witness, like in the case of the Pendle witches. Grace told wild stories about Jennet Bierley, her grandmother, and Ellen Bierley, her aunt, speaking of how they shape shifted into dark animals, paralyzing and locking her in barns and gruesome stories of how her grandmother entered the house of one Thomas Walshman, sucking the blood of his young child, who soon afterwards died. Furthermore, she told the judge about her aunt and grandmother digging up the child's body in the graveyard of Samlesbury, boiling and eating it and encouraging her to do the same. Last, she talked about witnessing them dancing with some kind of dark creatures and being sexually abused by these demons. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 37-38)

The three accused women begged the judge to further examine Grace Sowerbutts and why exactly these accusations made against them. Judge Bromley examined the girl who would not give him any direct answer, but explained that she was sent to learn her prayers with a priest called Thompson. After further questioning, she admitted that she had made it all up, and that the Roman Catholic priest, called Christopher Southworth, known under the alias Thompson, persuaded her to make up these stories, because the accused had recently deserted the old faith. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 39-40)

4.3.2. The Pendle Witches

4.3.3. Events leading up to the trials

Old Demdike, as well as Chattox, were known to be rivalling “cunning women” living near the forest of Pendle. However, the crucial event that brought the two families the attention of the magistrate happened on 18th March 1612. Alizon Device, daughter of Elizabeth Device and granddaughter to Demdike, met a pedlar from Halifax, who was on his way to Colne. When she asked him if she could buy some pins, he refused and she cursed him. He then slipped down to the ground and became paralyzed and was for some time unable to speak. He was brought to a nearby inn, where Alizon begged for his forgiveness. His son, however, reported him to the magistrate Roger Nowell. On the 30th March, Alizon was interrogated by Nowell and confessed being a witch, also accusing her grandmother and the Chattox clan. His examinations continued on 2nd April, gaining confessions from Demdike and Chattox. Demdike, Chattox, Alizon Device and Anne Redferne were captured and brought to the dungeon of Lancaster Castle. Six days later, on Good Friday, there were rumours of a witches’ Sabbath at Malkin Tower, intended to form a plan how to free the imprisoned, alleged witches. (see Fields 60-61) There had indeed been a meeting, probably convened by Elizabeth Device to consider ideas on how to help the imprisoned. As the gunpowder plot of 1605 was still vividly in minds of the people, the meeting might have been misinterpreted by Jennet Device as a malicious plot to free the prisoners by blowing up Lancaster Castle. People attending the meeting included Elizabeth Device, James Device, who stole a lamb for the feast, Jennet Preston of Gisbui, who had just been freed from a witchcraft accusation, Katherine Hewitt, Alice Gray, both probably friends of the family, Jane and John Bulcock, who were neighbours, Alice Nutter and Christopher Holgate, Demdike’s oldest son. (see Cobban 5-7)

4.3.4. The trials

4.3.4.1. York Assizes

The trial of Jennet Preston was the first one to take place in York, in 27th July 1612. Jennet was not accused for the first time, as she was once tried for the murdering of a child, but was acquitted. The accusations against her in this case included her riding on a white foal to Malkin Tower in order to attend the witches’ meeting and the killing of Thomas Lister senior. There were several witnesses, including Thomas Lister junior, who confirmed that old Lister had called out her name on his deathbed. Further evidence was found in her touching the

corpse, which then began to bleed. Old Chattox, who accused her of being a fellow witch, also denigrated Jennet. Judge Altham, who would later, together with judge Bromley, be at the Lancaster trials, found her guilty, and she was hanged on 29th July. However her family and friends insisted that she died an innocent woman, as she had never admitted any of the crimes she had been accused of. Potts portrayed her in a completely different light, describing her to be an evil woman, knowing no gratitude for being shown mercy once, instead engaging in a witch Sabbath soon afterwards. Jennet's husband attended the Lancaster trials, because he wanted to see the so-called witnesses, who finally brought his wife to the gallows. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 31-32)

4.3.4.2. Lancaster Assizes

The Lancaster Assizes took place on 18th and 19th August 1612. On the first day of the trials, Anne Whittle, Elizabeth Device and James Device were to be tried, as well as Elizabeth Southernns, had she survived prison. The legal process was, compared to today's trials, very short. As Poole describes it, "[...] the greatest reliance was placed on the unrehearsed reaction of the accused to the evidence against them, most of which was read out rather than given in person [...]" (Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 32)

The first to be tried was Anne Whittle, known as old Chattox, who was accused of the murder of young Robert Nutter by witchcraft, after he tried to force himself onto his daughter. Her confession was read back to her, changed by legal jargon and only used selectively. She was accused by Robert Nutter to have bewitched him, shortly before he died. After hearing further crimes that she was said to have committed, Chattox confessed and begged for God's mercy on her daughter Anne Redferne, who was brought in next, accused of the murder of Robert Nutter. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 33-34)

The next one facing trial was Elizabeth Device, who was at a disadvantage because of her facial deformity. She was charged with murdering John and James Robinson of Barley by witchcraft. She held strong asserting her innocence, even as the evidence, which she had given at a weak point, was read out against her. Only as her nine-year-old daughter Jennet Preston spoke out against her, she broke down and cried for mercy. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 34-35)

The next one was James Device, who, when brought to court, was hardly able to remain conscious. It seemed that he attempted suicide in the gaol. He confessed the evidence read out against him out of fear. In his account, he reports how he would get revenge on people who hurt him with the help of his familiar Dandy. Jennet also spoke of his misdeeds at

the meeting at Malkin Tower, as well as repeating Catholic prayers, which she heard from James. Anne Whittle, alias Chattox, Elizabeth Device and James Device were found guilty, Anne Redferne not guilty as the evidence against her was not enough. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 36-37)

On 19th August 1612, the second day of the Lancaster Assizes, Anne Redferne was again accused, now for the murder of Robert's father Christopher. His daughter was sure that witches were the source of her father's demise and Demdike and James Device had spoken out against her, saying that they had seen her make clay pictures. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 40-41)

Alice Nutter was a special case in the trials, as she was the only woman from the gentry and had hardly had the need to seek the end of poverty or additional power. She was said to have killed Henry Mitton for denying old Demdike a penny. The evidence against her came from James Device, claiming that he had heard Demdike talk about Alice Nutter's involvement in the killing. As there was seemingly no serious evidence, special attention was laid on her being at Malkin Tower. In order to test Jennet Device, the judge tried trick questions to trip her up, but with no success. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 41-42)

Next, Katherine Hewitt, alias Mouldheels, was tried and, after Jennet sidestepped another trick-question while giving evidence, was found guilty of killing one Anne Foulds. Jane Bulcock and her son John were accused of maddening a woman called Jennet Deane by witchcraft. Jennet Device, again the chief-witness, was able to pick them out and accuse them, telling them where they sat at the meeting and recognizes John to be the one to turn the spit there. At this point Jennet Device spoke out and said that she could not find one of the people from the meeting. (see Poole *Wonderful Discovery* 44) Poole states that "[...] the missing woman from Craven could only have been Jennet Preston, executed at York three weeks before for the murder of Thomas Lister with the supposed connivance of the others at Malkin Tower." (Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 44)

Alizon Device was the next to be tried and her case promised to be a spectacular one. As Alizon pleaded guilty, being sure that she had lamed the pedlar, she normally would not have a chance at trial. Judge Bromley, however, made an exception, leading in the lamed pedlar, John Law, accompanied by his son Abraham. Alizon fell to her knees, begging for the pedlar's forgiveness, which he accepted. The judge then gave her the chance to heal the pedlar, to which she answered that she was not able to, but had her grandmother, old Demdike, lived, she would have been able to do the deed. After this, Alizon Device and Jane and John Bulcock were found guilty. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 44-46)

The last ones to be tried were Margaret Pearson and Isabel Robey, both not necessarily facing punishments by death. Margaret Pearson had been tried for witchcraft before and was now accused of killing a horse or mare, the main evidence being a testimony by Chattox, saying that Pearson confessed to her that she was a witch. Isabel Robey had four depositions from her neighbours against her. They described her to be a quarrelsome woman, and that any dispute with her ended in illness or ailment. Both were found guilty, Pearson of misdemeanour and Robey of felony. (see Poole, *Wonderful Discovery* 46-47)

5. Manifestations of Witchcraft and Society in the novel

The novel is set some years before the actual trial, which makes up the ultimate climax of the book. The story of the alleged witches starts a long time before any accusations are spoken. Sharratt tells in a lively way of how they came to be, what happened before the trial began and how social and political changes, as well as natural disasters like hailstorms and famine increased tension, fear and superstition among the people of Pendle. Belief in witchcraft flourishes as Sharratt rolls out the story of how the alleged witches were offered a glimpse into a magical world, received their powers by getting into contact with their familiars and how they work their magic.

5.1. Society

The role that society plays in the novel is crucial for the development of the characters as well as of the plot. In an interview, Sharratt describes society as one of the major aspects that distinguishes the Pendle witches from the Salem witches of 1692. While the Salem witches lived in a society that was completely Puritan, the reformation was very slow in gaining a foothold in Lancashire, especially in the region of Pendle. A big number of families, also from the influential gentry, decided to remain loyal to the old faith, dividing society.⁹

5.1.1. Family constellation

The constellations of the two main families in the book are quite similar to each other, but otherwise also very different to families of the surrounding villagers. While in traditional families the man had the leading role in the family, while the female was most of the time in charge of the household, Demdike's and Chattox's families both miss the ruling male part. After both their husbands, in Chattox case more than one, have died, the two elderly ladies remain the matriarchs of the family. Furthermore, both of them are the chief witches of their families, as well as the most powerful ones in both their families. Demdike is the root of all magic in the book, and also the all-knowing force, to whom everyone comes when they are in need of help. After she receives her powers from Tibb, she soon introduces her daughter Liza in her herbal knowledge. Some time later, she helps Chattox and her daughter Annie with

⁹ http://www.marysharratt.com/books_dwh_about.html (24.4.2015).

getting revenge on Robert Assheton, opening Chattox's mind to the world of magic and making it possible for her to find her familiar, Fancy.

When Liza decides to disregard all use of magic, Demdike tries to introduce Alizon to the magical world, but Alizon simply wants to live a normal life. Demdike seems in control for the most part of the book, even like some kind of puppet master. She knows how to treat people and how to encounter each situation so it would benefit her and her family or at least to twist it in a way that no harm comes to them. As the book proceeds, the leading role of the family falls to Alizon, which probably also raises Demdike's hopes that she would also be her apprentice when it comes to cunning and, therefore, encourages her until the end to embrace her powers and accept her familiar. Demdike foretells correctly that Alizon will be her perfect follower, as Alizon harbours strong magic in herself, as the incident with the pedlar shows, Alizon however never gets the chance to accept her destiny before it is too late. Demdike offering Alizon her place on the top floor of Malkin Tower symbolises not only giving up her old sleeping spot, on the top floor of the tower, but also handing over the leading role. The tower's upper room, secluded but cold and harsh, functions symbolically in some way as head of a family, being responsible for their survival, which means having the freedom to make decisions but still having to bear the brunt in difficult or dangerous situations:

" [Alizon] turned away, for [she] knew [Demdike] was offering [Alizon] much more than a room. Thought [Demdike] had kept her word to [Liza] not to badger [Alizon] about familiar spirits, she was now inviting [Alizon] to take her place at the top of the tower, the place where a cunning woman would sleep." (Sharratt 206)

Alizon is a very kind-hearted girl, but she lacks her grandmother's wisdom in difficult situations. At one point, she speaks of a dream with her gran: "I remembered the dream I'd had of Gran fitting the garland upon my head. Her hopes of carrying on the family business fell upon me, but I could only disappoint, for I was unworthy of such a calling." (Sharratt 162)

As Alizon, for instance, tries to protect her friend Nancy from Chattox, she acts from the heart, being over-protective, and assuming the worst of Chattox, which, as it is later revealed, was a mistake, but she realizes this too late and accuses Chattox when Nowell manipulates her. Furthermore, she also takes responsibility for Jamie. When she finds out about him making clay pictures, she takes it upon herself to keep it a secret from others and to stop him in his doing, albeit without success. On the market place, where she finds out that people are becoming suspicious about her brother, she is not able to prevent the rumours from

spreading and to stand up for herself. This succession of failures probably only strengthened her will to stand up for her honour when John Law insults her, heightening the force of her unwilling attack.

5.1.2. Religious situation

In the novel, a number of changes in religious beliefs in England are described through the eyes of the characters. Catholicism inhabits many rituals that were related to magic by the Puritans, for instance, the sacred mystery of the Eucharist-bread and wine becoming transformed into the blood and flesh of Christ, the belief in miracles and holy wells, which have their origin in pagan beliefs. Demdike and Chattox, the two oldest characters, born during the reign of Henry VIII, describe their youth with the old faith.¹⁰

They nostalgically talk about the old days, not because of the old church, but because of the religious feasts they celebrated together, whereas now their daughters do not have the same possibilities as they had. Especially Chattox does not seem to take religion very seriously. While she dutifully appears at church every Sunday, Demdike recalls an incident where she was pilloried for adultery and Chattox, “[f]ull blasphemous, [...] teased that she’d pray to Saint Uncumba, the patroness of women who wished to be rid of their husbands [...] .” (Sharratt 40)

The prayers of the old religion play an important role in Demdike’s blessings. In some situations, the Latin words make her recall some of the festivities of the old religion, contrasting them with the ways of the new religion.

“[Mistress Bradyll] was too young to remember either the old Latin prayers or the crucifix that had once hung upon our rood-screen. On procession days we had carried it round the fields and pastures to bless the land, the animals, and the crops, for Christ’s passion was the promise of life everlasting. Now the cross that hung in our church was stark, bare wood, and those walls, once painted with pictures of the saints and their stories, were white-washed, empty [...] .” (Sharratt 47)

Another follower of the old religion is Alice Nutter. At one point, Demdike watches her praying forbidden garnet beads, which were not allowed since the time of Mary Tudor. According to Demdike, even having a rosary could be enough Alice Nutter to be whisked off to Lancaster gaol. Alice Nutter’s husband, Richard even shelters Jesuits. (see, Sharratt 50) This seems to be a well-known fact for the villagers, but as Richard attends the church-service

¹⁰ http://www.marysharratt.com/books_dwh_about.html (24.4.2015).

of the Anglicans as he is expected to do, nobody reports him to Nowell. However, when there is the suspicion that the Spanish might invade England under the reign of Philip II, rumour has it that Nowell believes that those who harbour papists, including Richard and Alice Nutter, the Towneleys, the Shuttleworths and the Southworths, are in favour of the invasion.

At the time Liza's husband John was still alive, long before she found salvation in the new religion, Liza celebrated the old days:

“At Hallowtide Liza insisted on walking up Blacko Hill, as we'd always done, for our midnight vigil on the Eve of All Saints. [...] In the old days we'd held this vigil in the church, the whole parish praying together, the darkened chapel bright as day with the many candles glowing on the saints' altars. [...] I did not believe my loved ones were in purgatory waiting, by and by, to be let into heaven. There was no air of suffering or torment about them, only the joy of reunion.” (Sharratt 89-90)

When Alizon is five years old, she accompanies Demdike to Richard Nutter's house, because he is close to dying. There Demdike brews some herbs in order to treat his illness and reduce his pains, Richard Nutter asks to see the statue of the Mother of God, which once had stood on the altar in the old church. He had rescued it from destruction and harbours a Jesuit in a secret room of his house. This priest anoints Nutter and then prays for his soul. Years after Richard Nutter's death, Alizon eavesdrops on Alice Nutter and Mistress Towneley speaking of someone arrested in another village for harbouring a Jesuit. Alizon realizes for the first time, how dangerous Alice Nutter's generosity and loyalty for the old religion actually is, when they spoke about a catholic “traitor” being literally sliced open during execution. The usual punishment for such a crime is “being draw, hanged and quartered”, and Alizon very much realizes that she is from now on harbouring a secret that makes her a witness of high treason, punishable like the one committing the crime him/herself.

Finally, Sharratt introduces a completely different kind of faith into the story. Demdike, as well as Alizon, often encounter a strange, magical woman in dreams and visions, who is said to have sent their familiars. She is called the Queen of Elfhame. The Queen of Elfhame is part of Scottish folklore and is often mentioned in manuscripts of Scottish witch trials. But also old British witches mentioned her as their supernatural mistress, making her part of rituals, like the “black mass” or witches' Sabbath. In Italian folklore, she is called “Queen of the Fairies” and a fellowship developed that grew especially in the Middle Ages. The Catholic Church persecuted those who believed in faeries as Pagans, who worshipped the

goddess Diana, who was linked to the goddess Artemis, the personification of virgin nature.¹¹

Demdike describes the Queen of Elfhome as follows:

“[...] I tumbled into a shimmering fever dream. Three paths led off into the blue-bell wood. One led to the right, another to the left, but some tug inside made me set off down the middle path as I called out after Tibb, begging him to show himself. Instead I saw a lady come riding upon a white horse. Rapturous lovely, she was, her red-gold hair shimmering like the sun at daylight gate. The woodland rang with the gold and silver bells twined in her horse’s lustrous mane. Lifting her hand in blessing, the rider smiled as though she’d known me since I was a babe. [...] Fresh and new as unfurling spring leaves, she was, but older even than the popish faith. She was not the Queen of Heaven, but a queen of earth, Queen of Elfhome.” (Sharratt 37-38)

Demdike explains to Alizon the meaning of the three paths that are mentioned above, namely that one leads to heaven, one to hell, but the one in between is the one leading to the forest of the elves. Alizon realizes that her grandmother’s beliefs are not as easily assigned as, for instance, Alice Nutter’s, but “[...] a twisting thing, its shape as ever-shifting as Tibb’s” (Sharratt 288) Furthermore, the Queen of Elfhome is said to have sent the familiar spirits in the story, so she might be seen as the source of all magical powers in the novel. That the alleged witches need their familiar spirits, who were sent by the personification of Pagan folklore and seemingly know Catholic prayers and other religious statements, which they can whisper in the ear of their witch, and Catholic charms as well to work their magic, draws Catholicism even more closely to magic and Paganism, which is taken as a justification by the puritans to persecute witches, who were often closely related the Pagan Queen of Elfhome to the Devil.

5.1.3. Neighbourhood

Considering the topic of society, neighbourhood is an important fact to keep in mind, especially in communities and villages where people live close to each other and where rumours and hostility are quick to spread. Due to the collapse of the old religious system, a constant change in faith, often accompanied by prosecution of those who remain true to what they believed, numerous catastrophes and excruciating hunger and poverty, a high degree of tension is bound to develop in society.

At one point in the novel, Alizon muses about what Demdike told her about old days and the old faith, where it seemed to have been more natural to help each other and provide assistance in critical times. The Towneleys, belonging to the fellowship of the old faith, keep up rituals from the past, such as: “[...] giving out funeral doles of bread to the poor.” (Sharratt

¹¹ http://www.merciangathering.com/fairy_queen.htm (24.4.2015).

194) Alice Nutter is another example of a highly charitable soul, saving Demdike and her family more than once from starvation when times are hard, and even volunteering to take Alizon in as a maid after the incident with the pedlar. Worth mentioning at this point is, that Alice Nutter's faith also belongs to the old religion. But compassion between neighbours cannot be expected with all people in Pendle. That compassion is closely linked to religion is also shown when Demdike decides to look for work at Sarah Holden's house. Sarah Holden tries to get rid of her with the excuse that she already has a sick child in the household and no need for more bad luck, this being especially directed at Liza, because of her quint. As Demdike argues that this was not a Christian way to handle neighbours, Sarah Holden waves her off, saying that they are not neighbours. However, a quote, "[h]e that giveth unto the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse" (Sharratt 27), persuades Sarah Holden to show some compassion. According to Sharratt (28), the word *curse* may have played an important role in this persuasion as well.

Alizon thinks a lot about what it means for your social status to be a cunning-woman, which triggers her desire to lead a normal life instead of the one Demdike wants to introduce her to. She realizes that society would tolerate cunning-folk as long as they are in need of them, but none of them will ever forget of what you really are to them once they realize you have powers:

"Once you let folk know you'd the powers to bend and twist, you become a witch in their eyes, even if you sought only to help others. Neighbours would turn to you, all right, call on you if they'd need of you, except you'd never be one of them again, but forever on the outside looking in." (Sharratt 172)

Personal loss is an important issue when it comes to treating your neighbours, especially when belonging to the cunning-folk. In times of grief and disasters, it is only human to look for someone to project one's pain and anger to. Most of the time these scapegoats are people that do not fit into society or behave in an unacceptable way. The clan of the Southernns experience such a situation when they lose John by untimely death. All of them, including Demdike, try to stop Chattox because they believe that his death was her doing. Once her reputation is stained, Chattox turns into the scapegoat for most disastrous happenings. First she stands out of the crowd for her unwomanly behaviour when discovering her husband's affair, her unwillingness to stay in church any longer than needed, her unintelligible muttering and finally, her temper. Demdike is also guilty of actions that are unacceptable, like adultery, or affecting Robert Assheton when he pesters Annie Redferne, by farting into his face. However, she is wise enough not to show these things publicly and she knows how to treat

the gentry. Even so, nothing can save her life because when the first accusations are spoken aloud, this sets the ball rolling and one accusation leads to several more.

5.1.4. Women and beggars

The danger of losing one's property in hard times, like as the one the book is set in was prominent all the time. A physical handicap, resulting in an inability to work, an illness, the death of an essential family member or sudden poverty were all reasons that could end in begging. Demdike describes how fast this could happen in the following paragraph, when she failed to heal Hugh Bradyyll, resulting in him not being able to work properly anymore:

“The year before Bradyyll had broken his leg and the blacksmith had set it for him, but done a poor job, so the bone mended crooked. Nowadays the sorry man impeded about in such constant pain, he could no longer plough his field or herd his cows, and he'd no sons to do the heavy work for him. [...] Bradyyll's leg would never be right again, [...] the marrow inside the bone had wasted away. [...] If he could no longer get about on his two legs, he'd lose his livelihood, lose his leasehold on the farm.” (Sharratt 45-46)

Especially when experiencing great loss, many people looked for a way to let off steam and ease their pain. A popular solution is to blame others for the bad-luck. Social outcasts such as elderly people, like Demdike and Chattox, especially if they allegedly meddle in magic and herbal healing, poor folk and widowed women and beggars. In the case of Hugh Bradyyll, Demdike took the force of his anger.

At the time of the Lancashire witches, being a widowed woman often meant no hope of being able to afford a dwelling place. Without the wages of a husband, the last resort was often doing minor work, if any was available, or could only survive through begging. Before Demdike met Tibb, she was also forced to survive this way. After he showed her the art of cunning, supporting her in her charms and herbal knowledge. Her quality of life increases further, when Liza marries John, who has bright prospects of getting a job after his apprenticeship is finished. The family can even afford to pay Chattox's family some bribes so they would leave them alone. When Demdike seeks them out, she finds out that their living conditions are much worse than their own, simply because they had someone to earn some income.

Chattox's poverty becomes especially clear when she visits the Holden household to ask for work or food: “There she was stood, that hunched hag. That witch. Come a-begging, so Chattox had, her basket slung over one bony arm.” (Sharratt 169) To the question by

Alizon, if it is a clay figure Chattox carries in her basket, Chattox answers: “You heartless child. I’m a clemmed old woman without oats or bread. It’s clay I eat to fill my belly.” (Sharratt 170) Chattox’s example shows perfectly how a simple action intended to survive, like the gathering of clay in exchange for food, may be turned against the person. Superstition was widespread during those times and social exclusion was a dangerous aspect. As has already been stated above, people who did not fit into society, especially elderly women, were often seen as a burden and some people hardly had second thoughts in disposing of them.

Furthermore, not only lower class people have a hard time in the society described. Even though the main characters of the book are female, the society in which they live is clearly a patriarchal one. When we consider for instance the case of Nancy Holden or Alice Nutter, who are forced into marriage with men they did not love, Alice Nutter even remaining with the old faith and having to risk her life by harbouring a Catholic priest. The two main families in the novel, the families of Demdike and of Chattox, have another reason for being expelled from society into the light, fighting the patriarchal system. They are not only the alleged chief-witches, but also the patriarchs in their families, not being tamed by their husbands. Demdike speaks of one example of Chattox punishing her unfaithful husband:

“Wed her sweetheart, she had, the best-looking man in Pendle, so she swore, only he’d a wandering eye, [...] our Anne found her good man lying in the haystack with Meg Pearson. So what did my dear friend do but sneak up with a bucket of cold ditchwater and drench them both. [...] [S]he told her husband that he could have his trollop, for he’d not be welcome in their marriage bed ever again.” (Sharratt 40)

Not only Chattox, but also Demdike does not mind standing her ground, even when talking to people of a higher status. When she comes to Chattox and her daughter in order to help them deal with Robert Assheton, whom she encounters first on her way to the cottage, she first humiliates him by getting Tibb to frighten the horse, and then she confronts him at the farm, where he tries to force his way into the house in order to get to Annie Redferne. The situation plays out as follows:

“[Robert Assheton] lifted his arm to wrest me out of this way, but [Demdike], quicker and stronger than any old woman has any right to be, jumped on both his feet, forcing him backward. [...] [T]he brown dog appeared, taking his place beside [her]. [...] First time [she] ever saw a man’s face go green with fear. (Sharratt 111-112)

Both heads of the families do not act as society would expect them to, not being put down by men, or by people of higher standards. Their rebellion makes them a thorn in the side of society, resulting in men feeling threatened in their ruling position.

5.2. *Witchcraft*

Witchcraft is one of the major themes in the novel. It is linked to nearly every other issue that is dealt with. Never would those women and men have been heard of today if it was not for the magic skills they were claimed to possess. The most striking fact about the accused and witchcraft was, however, that most of them, those who also serve as the main characters in the novel, were of the opinion that they were, indeed, able to perform spells, even though they did not find themselves guilty.

5.2.1. (Alleged) Abilities

The list of abilities that is ascribed to the group of witches in the novel includes a variety of different magical activities and rituals. Concerning these, Sharratt keeps close to what Thomas Potts wrote in *The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster*.

Additionally, there are a few deeds mentioned that the witches were asked to do in the novel, and probably were able to do, but would not meddle in. Furthermore, there is a difference between the individual alleged witches about where they draw the line for themselves concerning white and black magic, as not all of them are willing prepared to use harmful magic. For this reason, each of the alleged witches, and the charms and rituals applied by them will be dealt with individually.

Demdike, the chief witch of the Southern family and the narrator of a great part of the book, is the first one to receive her paranormal powers. When she meets Tibb at the age of fifty, he convinces her that she is predestined to become a blesser, as this power has been running in her blood line for some generations. Her own grandfather was a horse-blesser at Read Hall, the home of the Nowells, keeping their animals healthy, not only through blessing, but also by the use of herbal knowledge: “[...] [H]e’d taught my mam all his herbcraft for healing beast and folk alike, which she, in turn, had taught me, though Mam herself had no dealings in charms.” (Sharratt 16) For Demdike, it is important to distinguish between a witch and “cunning folk”. According to her, there were a number of cunning folk in other villages. However, none of them were heard to make use of familiars. It is important to realize, where Demdike draws the line. She muses, if having a familiar automatically turns you into a witch,

and witchcraft was a deadly sin. The blessing and cunning, as, for instance, the monks of Whalley Abbey were known to do, cannot be considered to be witchcraft, because a witch uses the powers given to him/her to harm animals and humans alike. (see Sharratt 22) However, the before mentioned monks were killed by Old King Henry's troops with the help of the Nowell clan. So even though cunning folk were often sought out because doctors could hardly be trusted, those people were still walking on thin ice, especially if they failed to heal someone who later died.

Demdike's first use of magic is an incident at the Holdens', where she and Liza tried to find some work. When Anthony Holden comes back from his work, together with his farmhands, some servant girl fetches ale, which appears to be rotten. He accuses Liza of having cursed the ale, be it intentionally or by her mere presence. Demdike persuades him to let her try to lift the curse, which she does, speaking five Pater Nosters, five Ave Marias and the Creed, as well as the following charm:

Three Biters hast thou bitten
The Heart, ill Eye, ill Tongue:
Three bitter shall be thy Boot:
Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
In God's name. (Sharratt 30)

After witnessing Demdike mending the ale, the Holdens' call her a blesser and decide to ask her to work her magic again. Their son, Matthew Holden, is a sickly child and is not able to rise from his bed since he fell ill the winter before, the aftermath of his illness being the reason for his condition. After some time of considering, Demdike decides to try her luck in healing him, and again, Tibb helps her find the words, evoking memories of the old religion in Demdike from the reign of Mary Tudor. Demdike succeeds in healing the boy, but not without consequence. She falls ill herself after defeating the illness in Matthew Holden. After this incident, Liza realizes for the first time that Demdike has not fooled the Holdens when mending their ale, but her mother carries a power inside herself that she is just too eager to learn herself.

In the case of Matthew Holden, Demdike is able to use her powers successfully. However, this is not always the case. Hugh Bradyll's injury, is beyond mending, which is a dangerous situation for Demdike, because every time she fails to heal someone, or if their injury worsens or, in the worst case, the person dies, the personal grief of people can easily result in her being accused of being a witch and be condemned.

The first spell Demdike and Liza performed, which could actually get them hanged, was the one to find a thief.

“The rite of the sieve and shears [...] was [a]ncient. [...] Liza and I were stood facing each other, middle fingers of our left hands upon the handles of the shears to press the blades against the rim of the sieve, which hung suspended.” (Sharrat 58)

By this ritual, Demdike was able to make out who the thief of Kate Hewitt’s, also known as Mouldheels, spinning wheel, woven cloth and pewter plate is, namely Betty Whittle, Chattox’s older daughter. This spell probably marked the point at which Demdike becomes more open to spells that go beyond cunning. However, there are still some that she refuses to meddle in, ever, like for instance love spells and harmful spells, but this changes, when Chattox comes to her in need of help.

The only spell, which is certainly used by Chattox, is the one to produce clay pictures. She learned this skill, when she came to Demdike in need of help for her daughter Annie, who was repeatedly harassed by young Robert Assheton. When Demdike witnesses one of the incidents in which Robert comes to Chattox’s house, she decides to help Annie and leads her to a riverbank full of clay. She describes the ritual as follows:

“[...] You might model it in the shape of him that torments you, as close a likeness as you can manage. Then you might have a mind to stick a thorn in the clay where his private parts would be, to stay him and bind him. Or you might crumble a bit of his legs to lame him; or his backside to give him an awful case of piles; or his eyes, to dim his sight; or his head to befuddle his thoughts. A truly wicked sort might stick the clay doll in the fire and let him roast like the souls in hell.” (Sharratt 113)

At this point, it is not Chattox’s or Annie’s magic that makes it possible to bewitch Robert Assheton, as Chattox has yet to meet her familiar. Demdike offers them Tibb to do the work. One might question, if it was Chattox’s and Anne’s harmful spell, or if Demdike was to blame alone for the killing of Robert Assheton. If so, this would be a spell to intentionally harm, or in this case even kill, someone, finally labelling Demdike as the witch she actually never wanted to be. On the other hand, Demdike speaks of how Chattox has been chosen by a spirit before Robert Assheton died. This spirit is, according to Demdike, probably drawn to her due to her desperation. His name is Fancy, and while Tibb seemed to be a creature of the earth, Demdike believes Fancy to be of a darker kind, changing Chattox.

There are hardly any magical deeds done by Chattox that are proven. However, there are some assumptions and accusations concerning her and the harmful curses she has allegedly uttered. People seem to get suspicious about her, because she is an old woman who is prone to mutter to herself, nobody understanding a word that leaves her lips. At one point in the novel, Demdike herself is unsure of Chattox's loyalty, when she herself realizes that Fancy changes her old friend. When John is not able to pay the promised oats to Chattox and her family, he falls ill shortly after. Demdike is willing to try and lift the curse, even if that meant harming her old friend in order to save her son-in-law. She releases the mightiest magic she could muster in order to defeat Chattox:

“She threw salt we could spare into the fire, blessed horseshoes, rowan crosses, and crooked nails, and hung them over every door and window. She stoned a magpie and strung it up on the elder tree out back [...]. [Demdike] took [the] last living hen, pure black and full mettlesome, stuck her full of pins, then burned her alive whilst chanting her countermagic against Chattox. The bird shrieked out in agony, just as an old woman would do. [...] Next [Demdike] took a handful of our precious store of oats, mixed it with [John's] piss, made a cake of it, and, having named the cake Chattox, burned that too.” (Sharratt 146-147)

Demdike's magic leads to a storm coming up around Malkin Tower, which is closely followed by a desperate banging on the door. Believing it is Chattox fighting for her life, no one dares to open the door. However, when the storm ceases, they cannot find any corpse or even footprints, but it is John, who is dead lying on his pallet, looking like he witnessed a great terror shortly before his death. Only during the end of the book does Alizon come to know that Chattox was not the one, who cursed her father. If he was cursed at all, when Chattox talks to her after they had been imprisoned in the Well Tower and Demdike dies in her sleep. The possibility remains that he had indeed been cursed, even though Sharratt does not indicate that there had been another witch working her magic around Pendle, especially one that would want to harm John.

Even though there is no certainty that Chattox indulged in any more witchcraft, she does imagine a number of magical deeds during a feast at Malkin Tower, which was actually only a delightful night together with Demdike. Chattox

“[...] would cling to our secret feast [...] and she would embroider it something fierce to make it even more fantastic. She'd say that we'd shared a magnificent feast at Malkin Tower with sweet butter, cheese and bread, roasted meats, and plentiful wine and beer, all served to us by our familiars, my Tibb and her Fancy [...]. Speaking of our banquet, she'd say that we'd no fire or even a single candle for light, but that the imps themselves lent us their magical glow, not only Tibb and Fancy, but a host of she-spirits besides. She'd say that some creature that took the shape of a spotted bitch told me, within her own hearing, that she would be granted silver, gold, and great wealth.” (Sharratt 120)

This passage carries some major importance. First of all, it displays in how far the way the alleged witches are treated influences their mind and clear thinking. Even though torture per se was forbidden in England, the conditions the witches were held in, in reality as well as the novel, make further uses of torture unnecessary. Being imprisoned for a long time in the dark, cold Well Tower, without any food or hygienic facilities, even some space to wander, could have conjured up some of the fantastic stories that the alleged witches readily confessed. Second, the story strengthens the picture of the stereotypical witches feast. A group of witches, in this case the two chief witches, would dance around a magical fire by moonlight, their spirits or other unworldly creatures providing them with countless beverages. Young Edmund Robinson in the witchcraft trials of 1633/34 told a similar story. He claimed to have witnessed a witches' Sabbath but later confessed he had made it all up, inspired by the stories he heard at the witch trials of 1612. (see Boswell *The Pendle Witch Child*)

Alizon was the only one of the accused, who, in her own words, did use magic, although unintentionally, but with disastrous and harmful consequences. In the novel, Sharratt describes a situation where an eleven-year-old girl from the neighbourhood, Isobel Bulcock, and a number of other children start bullying Alizon on her way home from her friend Nancy Holden. After calling her mother a whore, her grandmother a witch and, going one step further, accusing Alizon of having witch-blood herself, Alizon loses her temper and shouts at Issy, who falls ill a few days later. Demdike warns Alizon to keep her temper down and together they make their way to heal Issy. After this incident Demdike reveals to Alizon that she will meet her familiar soon. Alizon, however, is afraid of embracing the power and to ask for her familiar's name, for she wants to lead a normal life.

The next time her powers burst out is when Alizon meets the pedlar John Law. He insulted Alizon, accusing her of being a prostitute and thus unleashes her anger, resulting in her accidentally laming him, the event that led to the trials.

The last member of the household who really indulges in magic is Jamie. He learns from his familiar how to get back on the people who meant harm towards him or his family and who insulted him for his mental disability. The problem with Jamie is that he does not seem to be able to grasp the full impact of his actions. He does not know how far he actually endangers himself and his family. He does, however, know that he is not willing to sell his soul to his familiar, Dandy, as it belongs to Jesus Christ. Jamie is instructed by his familiar how to make

clay images to get his revenge. When Alizon finds out what he is up to, she tries to stop him. However she tells Demdike that Chattox has worked the spells. Due to that fact Demdike's counter-spells are useless and Jamie's victims, one being mistress Towneley, die. Furthermore, Jamie seems to be the only one who harms another person, John Duckworth, simply by touching him: "I only touched his arm, our Alizon. Dandy did the rest. There was never a clay picture. Dandy could kill him on account of my touching him." (Sharratt 218)

A special case concerning magical abilities concerns Tibb and the other familiars. They are magical and otherworldly creatures and wield magic in numerous situations throughout the novel, even when they are not currently assisting their witches in their own rituals and charms. An example that stands out prominently is Tibb's fortune telling. He does that from the very beginning. On their second meeting, he foretells the future and tells Demdike details about her long lost sweet-heart. The issue of clairvoyance is one of the things that the old and the new religion agree on, namely that fortune telling is a sin, except when God provides insight into the future by visions or dreams. This fact clearly cuts the notion of familiar spirits off from the religions of the state and categorizes them, and furthermore also paganism, as devilish doing, even though, the Catholic faith included some of the old rituals into the faith.

The very last issue concerning alleged magical abilities is superstitious doings by village people. John Device provides us with a number of examples. After losing his parents when he was very young, his fear of witchcraft and the fear of those that might inherit some kind of magical power, which they may use for evil doings, never really ebbed away. It is not all kinds of magic that he is afraid of, he thinks that especially poor people need cunning folk like Demdike to ask for help. John fears witchcraft, that disastrous and harmful magic that destroys people's property, sickens their cattle or themselves, sometimes even killing them. In order to keep himself and his family and friends safe, he resorts to superstitious practices.

"Though he was no cunning man himself, he wasted no time in drawing upon his own charms of protection, clambering upon a ladder to hang a horseshoe and a rowan cross over our door at Malkin Tower. To safeguard his master's cattle, he nailed three horseshoes over the shippoon door, and behind that door he hung a sickle and a rowan switch, behind each beam a bit of cold iron. [...] [H]e tied holed stones round [the cattle's] necks to guard them from black magic and lightning besides. [...] [H]e had [Liza] wear a twisted iron nail on a string hidden down her smock to keep her and the baby safe. Of an evening he threw salt in the fire to banish the evil eye." (Sharratt 78)

5.2.1. Representation of witch-stereotypes: The old hag vs. the young and seductive “femme fatale”

As discussed above, there are several definitions of a witch. However, it is impossible to find one universal description. Guiley sees the witch as a person who is able to control cosmical forces, as well as participating in rituals and charms. Levack proposes a similar definition, a human being who is capable of using magic but his/her intentions are malicious. The original meaning of the Old English word *wicca*, “[a] man, who practises witchcraft or magic; a magician, sorcerer, wizard”, implies that the witch is a man (Summers 14).

One important aspect of *Daughters of the Witching Hill* is the different representations of witches. On the one hand, Sharratt describes Demdike and Chattox in terms of the stereotypical “old hag witch”, their intimidating appearance forcing some frightful respect from their neighbours and society as a whole. On the other hand, the witch can also be a *femme fatale*, as represented by Alizon and in some way Anne Redferne.

In the early 16th century, when the story is set, Demdike is already an elderly woman, mother of two children, Kit and Liza, and grandmother to Alizon, Jamie and Jennet. Sharratt describes Demdike’s development from her youth, when she describes herself and also Chattox as a rather beautiful young woman, up to her eighties. When she meets Tibb, she is already in her fifties and has been a widow for nineteen years. The more Demdike comes of age, and the story progresses, the more frightful and respected she seems to be by the community, advancing the stereotype of the old and ugly witch. Even her family admits at one point that her appearance has changed: “[...] [O]ur gran did look a frightful thing. Her coif was askew and her grey hair, thick and unruly, sprang out every which way, but most unnerving were her eyes, milky and clouded.” (Sharratt 156) A malfunction or distinctiveness of the eyes was a dangerous issue as it was often associated with the myth of the “evil eye”, and thus associated with witchcraft and the Devil. A further example is Liza’s squint. Liza represents, “the unknown” and, resulting from this, the fearsome outsider. Her deformation and temper make her stand out from the rest of her family and the village. At the beginning, Demdike works her magic, she is very keen on learning the art of cunning herself. Some may conclude that the deformation is an indication of her being destined to be a witch right from the beginning, even though she rejects the issue completely later on in her life. Another indication, which then also leads to the next issue of discussion, is the witch as a seductive *femme fatale*. The term “*femme fatale*” means “deadly woman”. The *femme fatale* is characterized as follows:

“[...] [The femme fatale is] hard to figure out for most of the storyline. Her motives may seem conflicted or vague. She can also play the part of the trickster or deceiver. Although not always the story's outright villain (sometimes she may be portrayed as an antihero or in a more sympathetic light), the femme fatale represents the dangers of lustful desire and often leads her lovers into risky or compromising situations.”¹²

In the case of Liza, whose appearance is impaired by her facial deformation, still has a seductive influence on her future-husband John, who is attracted by her when they first meet. His attraction to Liza gets him involved in a family of witches and due to Demdike's friendship to Chattox, he improves the family income by paying oats each year. This finally leads to his downfall and finally to his death, or so he believes.

Years after her husband's death, Liza finds some elusive comfort in the arms of the Puritan Richard Baldwin. But when she is pregnant with his child, he deserts her, to escape social disgrace. As a Puritan, giving in to his desires and getting an unmarried woman pregnant, in an adulterous relationship, his honour would be ruined, so he denies his illegitimate child. Thus Liza is exposed as the femme fatale endangering Baldwin's honour by letting him indulge in his sexual desires.

Annie Redferne is a similar case of an involuntary “femme fatale” Without actually wanting it, she becomes the object of desire of Robert Assheton, who becomes nearly obsessing about her. Even after encountering Demdike and Chattox at their dwelling place, each demanding him to let Anne in peace. Considering their status and rumours running wild in the village, this should have been enough warning for Robert Assheton to stop his pursuit. For some reason, however, he does not harass the girl. His obsession with Annie finally results in his untimely death from witchcraft.

Finally another femme fatale is Alizon Device. When encountering Dick Baldwin, Demdike states: “[Richard Baldwin] speaks to Liza and me, ignoring young Alizon, for he doesn't trust himself to even look at this girl whose beauty and sore hunger would be enough to make him sink to his knobbly knees” (Sharratt 4) So, according to Demdike, Alizon's sheer appearance seems to be seductive enough to make a Puritan like Dick Baldwin fall from grace. Furthermore, when Nowell questions her, after the incident with the pedlar, he at first bribes her with wine and good food, and then tries to get some confessions and accusations out of her, before forcing himself on her in order to find a witch's mark. Alizon seems to be the only femme fatale in the book, who does not realize her impact on men. Only much later, on her walk to Lancaster gaol, even one of the guards accompanying them seems to take a

¹² <http://the-animatorium.blogspot.co.at/2013/04/of-witches-femme-fatales-and-film-noir.html> (19.4.2015).

liking to her. At the end, he even promises Alizon to ease her suffering by clinging to her feet, a an act of mercy normally only done by dear friends or family members of the accused.

6. Implementing the novel “Daughters of the Witching Hill” in the EFL classroom

6.1. Teaching Reading in the EFL classroom

What does it actually mean to “read” a text? In order to read and make sense of a text, there is interplay between the information that is provided by a text and the knowledge that is brought in by the reader. According to Hedge, at least six types of knowledge are needed to make sense of a text: syntactic knowledge, morphological knowledge, general world knowledge, sociocultural knowledge, topic knowledge and genre knowledge. The knowledge that a reader already has and uses to interpret a text is referred to as top-down processing, while the decoding of the individual letters, words or other language items is called bottom-up processing. (see Hedge 188-189)

The question of how these forms of knowledge can be developed and what kind of texts can have a positive influence is one that is hard, if not impossible to answer as there is no simple methodology to the teaching of reading. It depends on the teacher to bring about a decision on which pieces of text to read with which students, as every class has its own features. Culture, age, language skills, gender, size of class and relevant events in the students’ lives can differ to a great extent from one class to the other and have an influence on the decision which is to be made concerning the text, the length, the difficulty, as well as what goals are meant to be achieved, what material is used and how the tasks accompanying the text are designed or if they are needed at all. (see Hedge 205)

6.1.1. Selecting a text

As discussed above, there are a number of criteria, which have to be considered in order to select a suitable text for a class. Research studies have resulted in dividing between two types of reading, namely extensive reading and intensive reading. Intensive reading tasks in the classroom usually involve that kind of short text, which is found in textbooks. These shorter passages, usually no longer than a page, aim at helping students develop and train their reading strategies. However, this kind of reading is more convenient for younger or weaker students, as tasks concerning this kind of text often involve making sense of unfamiliar words through context or dictionary work, building up their vocabulary, predicting content, or simply to familiarize students with written English. In order to achieve this, it takes a close study of a text, but to create possibilities for the students to gain substantial practice, letting

them work on their strategies more independently, can only be achieved through extensive reading material. (see Hedge 202)

There has been much discussion among scholars on how to define the term “extensive reading” as some defined it as skimming activities on longer tasks, some define it through the number of books that have been read, for example, by year, some as the time someone actually spends on reading and finally time spent reading in class. (see Hedge 202) Because of this diversity, Hedge offers some guidelines to provide a basic idea. First is selecting the texts to be read from a wide variety, for instance short stories, novels, newspaper or magazine articles and professional readings. Second, extensive reading includes reading frequently and regularly. Third, also the reading of longer texts, more than a few short paragraphs, like for instance a novel. Fourth, the reason why someone reads makes up an important point, whether it is out of personal interest, pleasure or curiosity, and the last corner point of extensive reading is reading longer texts not only in class, but also at home. Extensive reading is beneficial to work on text, which exceed the usual short passages dealt with at school, even though actual class time is limited. (see Hedge 20-203) This point proves to be of great importance concerning the teaching possibilities presented below, as these lesson plans also suggest a great amount of single work. The main point of this programme is to encourage students to work independently and foster their autonomy.

6.2. The use of novels

6.2.1. What is a novel?

The term novel includes a number of sub-types, such as a picaresque novel, which tells the story of a roguish hero, very often from a low social class, who stands up or gets in conflict with the norms of society, the novel of education, originally referred to as “Bildungsroman”, in which the protagonists coming of age is displayed, the epistolary novel, portraying the story in form of letters, satirical, utopian, gothic and detective novels. (see Klarer 12-13) The novel used for this explicit lesson can be categorized under the subgenre of historical novel, meaning that the actions of the novel are revealed in a realistic historical context, as well as historical fiction, as Sharratt uses the passed-on data and information by Potts, as well as interpreting the actions of the alleged witches in order to portray possible conversations, emotions and beliefs.

6.2.2. Why use a novel in the EFL classroom?

The use of novels in the EFL classroom offers a great variety of possibilities as well as challenges for the teacher and the students. If and what novels can be used in a particular class, in which English is not the mother tongue of most or all students, needs to be considered by the teacher. To read a novel that is not written in the mother tongue of the students makes it not only possible to use it to introduce culture, but also to work on it as a linguistic resource. It is important for students to be able to experience the novel and later to enable them to describe and comment it critically. (see Hajizadeh 275)

Using a novel can be beneficial, as it provides a completely different kind of material than that found in other teaching utensils, for instance, textbooks. A textbook does, on the one hand, offer the possibility to train shorter reading passages, ideal for tasks that are focused on looking for facts within a text, as well as activities to accompany those passages, like graphs, vocabulary lists or gap-filling activities, which a novel usually does not, but on the other hand, a novel provides a completely different type of reading experience. Students read for meaning and general understanding in a text which is multiple times longer than could ever be reproduced in a textbook, and come to read something that is natural in speech and writing, imaginative and often offers a broader plot as well as a variety of characters, climaxes and possibilities. (see Gareis 145)

Tsai summarizes in his article “Students’ Perceptions of Using a Novel as Main Material in the EFL Reading Course” a number of benefits that novels have to offer, that scholars like lkire, Gareis et al., Hişmanoğlu, Lazar, Melon, and Uyemura have outlined.

First, there is motivation, which can be triggered by the use of novels. Students do not simply focus on the language of the text, but a novel offers the possibility to let the students read for meaning instead of form. Connected events, cliff hangers or emotional involvement of the reader may unleash the force of intrinsic motivation, causing the students to proceed further in the story by themselves. Furthermore does finishing a novel, a significantly longer piece of literature, than for instance a short story or text in a schoolbook, release a higher amount of satisfaction and success. (see Tsai 104)

Second, novels offer a number of ways for language improvement. The reading of a longer text makes it much more authentic and makes items of a language available that are often only used by natives and not in textbooks, resulting in the perfect chance to master new linguistic forms as well as developing vocabulary and reading skills. More substance also provides a broader base for further tasks to engage in other skills, for instance speaking

through role-play and presentations, and writing in the form of different texts and projects. Novels that have become models for theatres and films can be connected to them during the course of some lessons, offering the possibility to practice listening. (see Tsai 104)

Third, novels are useful tools to introduce the students to a different cultural or historical time. While this may of course also be done through other media, a novel does not simply tell the story, but it offers insights on beliefs, attitudes, feelings and thoughts of the narrating character. The historical, social, political, and economical facts that are portrayed in the novel can be experienced in a completely different way. (see Tsai 104)

However, teaching literature and the use of novels does not only have benefits, but can pose some challenges on the side of the learner as well as the teacher. Khatib brings together some issues that some scholars raised and which should be kept in mind when one intends to use novels in the EFL classroom.

Problems might already arise when it comes to choosing literature that is appropriate for a class. When a teacher is about to select a novel, he/she has to keep in mind who his/her students are, what cultural and social background they have, what beliefs they share and what level of language they have already reached, especially when the mother tongue is not the target language. Depending on these facts, it needs to be considered, what level does the novel have, should it be a rather modern text or does it not matter how much has changed concerning syntax, lexis and semantics of contemporary language and the language use in the book, how much knowledge do students already have concerning the topic of the book and can students relate it to issues concerning life today or themselves and the society they live in to make it relevant for them? (see Khatib 203-204)

6.2.3. Why use this novel in the EFL classroom?

Hedge argues that in order to decide whether a text is useful in a classroom, the teacher has to find or state a reason why a particular, in this case, piece of literature can be beneficial in the development of reading skills. To check the text for suitability, she offers the following three questions:

- “1. What is the text about? [...] Why would you read this text in real life?
2. Are there different ways in which a reader would approach this text? [...] Which purpose will we choose and what strategies will learners need to fulfil that purpose?

3.What kinds of ability will help students to apply appropriate strategies? What can we set as pre-reading task?” (Hedge 207)

6.2.3.1. Relevance for the Curriculum

Considering Hedge’s question number 1, one cannot say that Sharratt’s novel is closely connected to the students’ everyday life, meaning that the events recorded takes place more than 400 years ago, in a society completely different from what is known by young adults today. It is, however, not simply a novel about witchcraft, but also relates to issues such as social structures, family life and dynamics, superstition, religion, poverty, discrimination, gender, age and power and corruption by authority. Furthermore, the topic “witchcraft” still has some relevance today, as there are traditional festivities such as Halloween that still involve the witch as a popular icon, which leads to yet other important issues dealt with in the novel: stereotypes and prejudice.

Standardized guidelines, as the Federal Ministry of Education for Austrian schools provides them, include the issues mentioned in the paragraph above. The novel as well as the lesson plan fulfils a number of educational fields¹³ which are described in the curriculum for L2 subjects. “Sprache und Kommunikation”, or language and communication, states that language competence as a whole makes up the main field that has to be developed in order to enable students to use other skills. Furthermore, the use of different topics in a foreign language, as it is encouraged in “Mensch und Gesellschaft”, or “Human/Person and Society”, shall help students to widen their horizon and foster their understanding of social contexts.

Curriculum Content and the basic teaching principles name some issues that are explicitly addressed by the lesson plans provided below. The number of lessons support the use of a variety of different materials and types of activity. “Vielfalt von Lehrmethoden, Arbeitsformen und Lernstrategien” (Varieties of teaching methods, forms of work and learning strategies) emphasise the need to provide a diversity of teaching techniques, including the use of different media, like presentations using PowerPoint, open learning models, portfolios, projects and reading diaries, in order to address as many different learning techniques and social skills as possible, and to give every student the chance to develop their strengths and work on their weaknesses. The topic of witchcraft and witch-persecution offers the possibility of an interdisciplinary approach to teaching, addressing the point

¹³ Educational fields and curriculum:

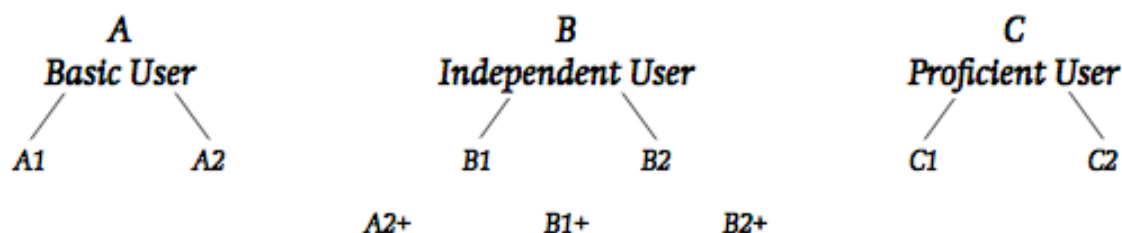
<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008568> (26.5.2015).

“Fächerübergreifende Aktivitäten”. As the novel can already be read with a 7th grade, there is a chance to speak to the class’s German teacher to start a project linked to “Faust”, or to simply explore the representation of the witch, as it is portrayed by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, as an impulse¹⁴. The main part of the reading *Daughters of the Witching Hill* is to be done individually at home. The teaching principle “Erwerb linguistischer Kompetenzen”, the acquisition of linguistic competences, stresses that individual reading needs to be done by students as well.¹⁵

At this point it should be mentioned that it would be advisable to use the novel *Daughters of the Witching Hill* in a “Wahlpflichtfach” (WPF). The educational aim of a WPF is to broaden the students’ educational view according to their interests. This enables the students have a voice in what they would like to read. Furthermore, a WPF makes it possible to read a novel of a higher level, even though the level according to the Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR) needs to be taken into account. Depending to the students, a WPF in 7th grade most likely includes students that have already reached a level like B1, B1+ and B2, some exceptions may have reached B2+ and C1.

The Common Reference Levels (CRF) are six levels of achievement when it comes to language proficiency, A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. Three plus levels have also been introduced, A2+, B1+, B2+. As B1 and B2 are the levels concerning the lesson plan below, there will be special attention to these levels, including B1+ and B2+.

¹⁶



Level B1, also called Threshold Level, describes mostly the stage of proficiency, in which the learner is able to communicate when in a foreign country, as well as easily coping with everyday situations. B1+, or Strong Threshold, remains mostly the same, except that the

¹⁴ Curriculum German:

https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/lp_neu_ahs_01_11853.pdf?4dzgm2
(26.5.2015).

¹⁵ See:

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008568> (26.5.2015).

¹⁶ the tables have been taken from: CEFR p. 32.

quantity of the exchanged information changes. Level B2 seems to mark a significant jump from the levels below it and represents the Vantage Level. Vantage, interpreted metaphorically, describes the learner as being able to look at things in a completely different way. Students can communicate more easily and freely, effectively interact in social discourse and increasing language awareness, which only continues to improve in the Strong Advantage Level, B2+. (see CEFR 34-35)

A set of different descriptors, or “Can-Do” messages, is dedicated to each category. However, these are again divided into the different language skills. In the table below, there are sets of descriptors that are worked on in the lesson plan below. It should be mentioned that not all descriptors belonging to a certain skill and level are listed, but those that have been used in creating this particular teaching idea.¹⁷

Processing Text (p.96)	
B1	Can collate short pieces of information from several sources and summarise them for somebody else. Can paraphrase short written passages in a simple fashion, using the original text wording and ordering.
B2	Can summarise a wide range of factual and imaginative texts, commenting on and discussing contrasting points of view and the main themes. Can summarise extracts from news items, interviews or documentaries containing opinions, argument and discussion. Can summarise the plot and sequence of events in a film or play.
General Linguistic Range (p.110)	
B1	Has a sufficient range of language to describe unpredictable situations, explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision and express thoughts on abstract or cultural topics such as music and films.
B2	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.

¹⁷ Note: The page numbers refers to the print edition of the CEFR

Phonological Control (p.117)	
B1	Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident and occasional mispronunciations occur.
B2	Has acquired a clear, natural, pronunciation and intonation.
Spoken Fluency (p.129)	
B1	Can express him/herself with relative ease. Despite some problems with formulation resulting in pauses and 'cul-de-sacs', he/she is able to keep going effectively without help.
B2	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party.
Overall Reading Comprehension (p.69)	
B1	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.
B2	Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.
Watching TV and Film (p.71)	
B1	Can follow many films in which visuals and action carry much of the storyline, and which are delivered clearly in straightforward language. Can catch the main points in TV programmes on familiar topics when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
B2	Can understand documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard dialect.

Overall Written Production (p.61)	
B1	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.
B2	Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.
Creative Writing (p.62)	
B1	Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined.
B2	Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned. Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write a review of a film, book or play.

6.2.3.2. *Tasks and strategies*

When considering questions 2 and 3 provided by Hedge, the teacher needs to keep in mind which task he or she might want to create and what strategies students might use to fulfil them. Tasks can be defined as “[...] feature of everyday life in the personal, public, educational or occupational domains.” (CEFR 157) The term task itself addresses a very broad field of possibilities, as the nature of a task can vary according to their use. They can be, for instance, of a creative kind, meaning that the students may need to create a story by themselves, they can be skill based, problem solving, like a jigsaw, interpretation, discussing, presenting and many more. Different tasks may vary in complexity, including a number of sub-tasks, as well as difficulty. Tasks can also include more than one skill at once, for instance note-taking during a documentary, or reading a text to be able to discuss and reflect it. In order to fulfil a task successfully, an activation of prior knowledge may sometimes be beneficial. (see CEFR 157-158)

It has become a standard practice for teachers to use a three-phase procedure during the lesson. This procedure then includes a pre-reading task, a while-reading task and a post-reading task. (see Hedge 209)

Ajideh argues that pre-reading tasks and their understanding of them has been changing exceptionally over a period of time, from the teacher simply informing the students about the reading that they are going to do in the near future, to providing a large number of different activities that help learners to develop interest in the topic or to get the chance to ponder it before actually reading the text. (see Ajideh 6-7) A pre-reading task can involve a number of different activities, with the aim to activate any prior-knowledge that students might have of the topic addressed, or to raise their interest in it, which may positively influence the comprehension process. (see Hajizadeh 277) An effective method at this stage is to actively include students in the process, for instance, letting them list any information they have on a specific topic, like in the brainstorming activity in the lesson plan introduced below. This way the teacher is able to provide useful terms and discuss new vocabulary. There is a wide selection of different activities that can prepare students in either schematic or language knowledge, or both. Some possibilities would also be the use of the title of a book or a picture, letting students guess the contents and then discuss them, or to let students try a quiz on how much they already know.

The idea of while-reading activity involves actively including and encouraging students while they read a text. Helping students grasp the main ideas of a text, understand the information provided, taking notes, asking questions, either by the teacher or by themselves, in order to reflect on the text and the opinions and attitudes which are presented, confirming their prior-knowledge or changing the way they have been viewing a topic before are essential duties of while-reading tasks. (see Hedge 210) Some may argue that these kinds of task interfere with the reading process, however Hedge states that “[...] many students report positively on the usefulness of while-reading activities and many teachers therefore try to encourage activity, reflection, and response while reading.” (Hedge 210) Focusing on the lesson plan below, Worksheet #2 proves to be a typical while-reading task, as students are first supposed to take notes during reading and later on discuss their answers in class.

The purpose of post-reading activities is to provide students with the opportunity to revise their while-reading activities, use the knowledge they have acquired in practice and focus on the content of the text in more detail and more consciously. Another possibility of a post-reading activity is to focus on linguistic features that the text provides and work on language competence. (see Hedge 211)

Hedge argues that a variety of different activities concerning reading offer students the possibility to work autonomously and apply their newly learned or further developed

strategies. The role of the teacher himself/herself is to provide material and assistance, if required, and otherwise let the students work individually. (Hedge 211)

In order to be able to complete the given tasks, students have to make use of different strategies. The CEFR states that

“[t]he user or learner naturally adapts, adjusts and filters task inputs, goals, conditions and constraints to fit his or her own resources, purposes and (in a language learning context) particular learning style. [...] Strategies [...] provide a vital link between the different competences that the learner has (innate or acquired) and successful task completion” (CEFR 159)

What these strategies are specifically remains unclear, as many scholars have come up with different descriptions. Goh sees the reason for this in the different aspects of learner strategies that have been chosen by different scholars. According to her, scholars agree on the fact that through such strategies, “[...] language learners can achieve their learning potential and become individuals who could learn and use language flexibly and independently.” (Goh 69) These strategies help learners in successfully learning a language, not only in class but also individually. Using strategies often requires a metacognitive knowledge, as the students need to be aware of their own learning type, as well as the influence of their classmates and their styles, they need knowledge of the task and its demands and about what strategies can be used with them. Furthermore, it is often the case that several strategies interact or success each other, should one not be enough or fail altogether. Two different types of strategies can be defined, those who foster learning the L2, for instance work on vocabulary, the second type is used for problem-solving and communication enhancement. This kind of strategy does not necessarily lead to language acquisition. Goh uses the example of two students who use a different communicative strategy and both encounter difficulties while producing speech. The first student tries to paraphrase his/her speech in a way as not to use a word which does not come to his/her mind. The other students might refer to its L1 counterpart or decide to keep silent completely and wait for the assistance of his conversation partner. The strategy of the second student will probably not result in an enhanced language development. Learners, who wish to prevent losing their face in front of others, sometimes use this avoidance strategy. (see Goh 68-70) It is important for teachers to be aware of the efficiency of instructing students on these strategies, as they “[...] help learners take control of their learning process, thereby improving their confidence, motivation and even performance.” (Goh 74) For example, having a look at the lesson plan below, the introduction of a vocabulary log has the aim of helping students develop their personal strategies for vocabulary learning. Students can first try out what strategies they have been using so far, change them accordingly and then discuss

in class their benefits and get ideas of other possible techniques. Furthermore, the teacher has the opportunity to hear students explain the purpose for using certain strategies. (see Goh 73)

6.3. Teaching Possibilities

6.3.1. Lesson Plans

6.3.1.1. Lesson 1

Rough time frame (min.)	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills/language system	Materials	Notes
5	Writing down ideas	SW	Writing	Paper	Students write down their thoughts connected to the term "witch"
15	Brainstorming	Class	-	Black- /White- /Smart- board	Brainstorming "Witch" + Discussion
3	Introduction "Daughters of the Witching Hill"	TT	(Listening)	-	Teacher introduces novel
Rest	Portfolio Explanation	Class	-	Worksheet #1	Explaining portfolio, answering questions
HW	Start reading the novel (20 pages min.)	-	Reading	-	Reading and collecting unfamiliar vocabulary

6.3.1.2. Lesson 2

Rough time frame (min.)	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills/language system	Materials	Notes
40	Documentary "Pendle Witch child"	Class	Listening	Video + Worksheet #4	Students watch "The Pendle Witch Child" and answer questions
(Rest)	Comparison	Class	Speaking	Worksheet #4	Comparison

6.3.1.3. Lesson 3

Rough time frame (min.)	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills/language system	Materials	Notes
10	Vocabulary Log Introduction	TT	Listening	-	Teacher gives examples for Vocabulary Log
20	Students try out Vocabulary Log	Pair work	Speaking/Listening	Paper	Students use their collected vocabulary and try to create a Voc.-Log
Rest	Presenting and comparing	Class	Speaking	-	Students share their ideas with class and teacher to gather ideas

6.3.1.4. Additional Lessons

6.3.1.4.1. Lesson I

Rough time frame (min.)	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills/language system	Materials	Notes
-	Collective reading + Work on presentations	Students	-	Worksheet #3, #5, #6	Individual student working time; help from teacher if necessary

6.3.1.4.2. Lesson II

Rough time frame (min.)	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills/language system	Materials	Notes
-	Presentations	Students – class	Speaking, listening	Cards, paper	Students present; Class gives useful feedback

6.3.1.4.3. Lesson III

Rough time frame (min.)	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills/language system	Materials	Notes
-	Discussion	Class	Speaking	Worksheet #2	Worksheet #2 is worked through together

6.3.2. Detailed Description of Lesson Plans

The novel *Daughters of the Witching Hill* is, due to the language level of the text, suitable for advanced pupils in a 7th or 8th grade, upper secondary. The level of the students is approximately B2 and the lesson plans in this section are created for a “Wahlpflichtfach”. In some cases, the “Wahlpflichtfach” includes two lessons a week, each week, but as this is not always the case, these plans include seven units at least. Depending on the level of the students, their motivation and working and reading speed, these plans may vary in length. Assumedly, the teacher needs to spend more time than the plans suggest. Seven weeks could be a realistic minimum time frame. Furthermore, it should be mentioned, that the students for whom this plan has been created have already received some basic information on how to study and analyse literature, in this case differentiating between round and flat characters and being able to find and describe them.

The first lesson starts with an activity that shall help the students to find their way into the topic. They are asked to collect some ideas associated with the word “witch”. The students might lack some of the vocabulary needed, so they may also write down some words and concepts in their mother tongue. After some minutes, they are asked to share their ideas with the class and write them down on the board in form of a brainstorming. Brainstorming proves to be an effective method to help students generate their ideas. (see Hedge 308) During this sequence the teacher should keep out as much as possible, only providing vocabulary when necessary. This activity shall show how much prior knowledge the students already possess on this topic. It can be assumed that this knowledge consists mostly of stereotypical notions of how witches are portrayed in modern societies, for instance words like “old woman”, “evil”, “burning”, “stake”, or maybe even links to movies like “Harry Potter”. If the novel is dealt with in 7th grade, a possible class project could be arranged, connecting the English classroom to the German, if the German teacher includes Goethe’s “Faust” in his teaching.

After all ideas have been stated and collected, the teacher helps to clarify possible ambiguities or misunderstandings and rearranges the information to a mind-map. The next step would be to take a photo of the board. When the lessons dealing with the novel are over, the teacher will again ask the students to collect their information and take a picture. These pictures can either be displayed in class or handed out to every individual student to show the progress they have made over time.

After this task follows the basic introduction of the book by the teacher. The main point of this part of the lesson is that students are familiarized with the novel they have to read and can have a look at it. Next, further plans on how the novel is to be used in the following lessons are explained. “Worksheet #1” is handed out to the students, which provides an overview on the main parts of a portfolio. The students get the chance to ask questions concerning the tasks. This may take up the rest of the lesson, or most of the lesson’s remaining time. A portfolio is the best way to collect a number of papers by students, which show their success and achievement over a certain period of time, as well as their strengths and weaknesses. (see Hedge 390). Tierney, Carter and Desai argue that portfolios help students to:

- “Make a collection of meaningful work;
- Reflect on their strengths and needs;
- Set personal goals;
- See their progress over time;
- Think about ideas presented in their work;
- Look at a variety of work;
- See effort put forth;
- Have a clear understanding of their versatility as a reader and a writer;
- Feel ownership for their work;
- Feel that their work has personal reference.” (Tierney, Carter, and Desai qut. In Hedge 390)

The students’ homework consists of reading at least the first three chapters of the novel and starting on a list of unfamiliar vocabulary, which have to be provided in the next lesson.

“Lesson 2” starts with a documentary called “The Pendle Witch Child”. The documentary includes not only information about the witch-trial of 1612, but also the witchcraft-case of 1634. As this second trial is not relevant for work on the book, only about 38 minutes of the documentary will be shown. Ideally, the teacher should have downloaded it in some way to minimize losing too much time in case of technical difficulties. If possible, trading a lesson with another teacher, so the students have a double lesson to watch the documentary and answer the questions, can be arranged. This would provide enough time to watch the

documentary, review problematic scenes, answer the questions and compare and discuss them in class. Should this be impossible to arrange and more time be needed, students should try to answer the questions as a homework assignment and compare in the next lesson. For this purpose they are provided with the link by which the documentary can be found.

In “Lesson 3”, the students will be instructed on how to create a vocabulary log. The teacher orally explains some techniques that can be used in a vocabulary log, for instance, graphs, translations or pictures. These examples can also be combined with representing corresponding ideas on the board. As a next step, students can try, in pairs of two, to create their own ideas of a vocabulary log. The material used for this is the unfamiliar vocabularies, collected by the students, from the first lessons when they started reading the book. After about twenty minutes, students will be given the chance to share their ideas with the other members of the class and get productive feedback and helpful input by students as well as the teacher. The vocabulary log is to be continued individually until the end of reading the book and added to the portfolio.

Next, there are three lessons, which do not necessarily need to succeed on the lessons above. Depending on the students and their needs, these lessons can be arranged as needed. This provides an opportunity for the teacher to give the students time to read part of the novel and work on their portfolio in class, so they have the possibility to seek assistance from the teacher or their classmates.

As the students have to give a presentation on either “Characters and Characterization”, “Setting and Historical Background” or “Witchcraft” (see Worksheet #5 in the appendix), “Lesson I” gives the students time to get together in groups of three or four people, discuss their topics and start working on the presentations together. Especially in the first phase of preparing the presentation, the students should get the possibility to ask the teacher if questions arise. In order to assist them outside class, the students receive a hand-out on planning and giving a presentation, as well as a checklist what they have to keep in mind while giving the presentation, useful expressions and how to evaluate the presentation skills of others in order to give constructive feedback. Furthermore, the group with the presentation topic “Characters and Characterization” are in need of prior knowledge concerning the analysis of round and flat characters. It is understood that this kind of analysis has been dealt with before. However, they are provided with “Worksheet #6” as a reminder and revision of the most important facts. All groups have, aside from giving the presentation, two more

obligatory tasks, a creative input and a hand-out. The creative input can be chosen freely by the students and offers the possibility that every single person in the group has something to work on and involve him or herself in the project. Some possibilities for this kind of input can be provided by a PowerPoint presentation, or by pictures, films or role-play. Especially the group working on the phenomenon of witchcraft can use this activity to display how some of the charms and spells were used. Additionally, using role-play is “[...]a fluency activity if it is performed in pairs or groups [...] [and] [s]ome students find role-play easier than free discussion because they do not have to face the cognitive challenge of finding original and intelligent things to contribute.” (Hedge 280)

“Lesson II” is dedicated to actually performing the presentations. Again, this time frame may have to be stretched, probably to a second lesson, in order to grant the students enough time to give their presentation, show their creative input and get feedback from the class as well as the teacher.

“Lesson III” is the last obligatory lesson in order for the students to be able to finish their portfolios. “Worksheet #2” includes a number of questions on which students need to make up their minds and express their views. Some of these questions can only be answered by way of interpretation; some questions will aim to start moral discussion in the classroom. The set of questions should induce the students to think critically about the characters and their actions and to transfer the situation to themselves - to think about how they would have felt and acted in such situations. This lesson will again have to be stretched further than a single fifty-minutes unit. Even though the lesson can hardly be fixed to a specific point in time, to get the most out of it, the teacher should do it at the very end. Even though some questions might spoil some information for students, who have not yet finished reading the novel, interpreting some situations without knowing the entire novel might be hard, if not impossible. The last question, “Do the characters in the book differ from how you would imagine a witch? If so, why? If not, why?”, should again result in a mind map, which is to be drawn on the board. Again, the teacher or a student will take a photo, and together with the photo taken at the beginning of the project, it can either be displayed in class or be handed out to the students. All in all, these photos reflect the progress and development that students have made in the course of their reading of the novel and on the basis of the tasks achieved.

There are also some activities, which can be done additionally if there is time, or if the teacher notices that students have a need for more information on some issues. At some point, the class may also need some clue as to how the novel relates to modern life, in how far the topic

is relevant for their own life. It is possible that the schedule of these lessons take more time to accomplish them as actually planned, But if there is no time for those extra activities, students might ask the teacher for advice on a topic, or if the teacher notices that great interest or great difficulties arise, additional lessons and tasks need to be introduced in separate additional lessons.

“Worksheet #7” provides such an additional task. The students are required to read a passage from the novel, in which John, a non-magical character in the novel, tries to keep his family and his Master’s cattle from magical harm. He uses a number of superstitious rituals, which are described in the chosen passage, in order to provide prior knowledge of superstitious influences on their own lives. Together with their neighbours, they have to collect their own ideas of superstition and their experiences with it.

7. Conclusion

This diploma thesis has investigated how society and witchcraft interplay in Mary Sharratt's novel *Daughters of the Witching Hill* and how these issues have been presented. The first part of the thesis consists of an overview of relevant information concerning the author and the book, as well as historical facts concerning the trial of the Lancashire Witches of 1612, details of relevant terms concerning witchcraft and an elaboration of society in the early 17th century England. The second part discusses the manifestation of witchcraft and society in the novel, while the third part provides considerations as to how this novel could be implemented in the EFL classroom, including concrete lesson plans and classroom activities.

Part of the analysis of the novel is the issue of witchcraft and society. The analysis shows that historically, as well as fictionally, community life played a crucial role in terms of witchcraft persecution, and, especially, in the case of the Lancashire Witches. As mentioned above, Sharratt emphasizes that society and superstition were major factors in witch persecutions. First to be considered, is the family constellation of the two most affected families, both heads of the families being the alleged chief witches at the same time, one also trying to pass on the gift of "cunning" to her daughter and granddaughter. Second, the tension which arose from the abruptly changing religious situation, considerably impedes a viable society. Trusting neighbours had become difficult, as harbouring members of the rivalling religion was something that was sometimes done by the gentry, even though it was a great risk, often resulting in punishment for high treason. Sharratt has interwoven this aspect, which is sometimes neglected in literary texts dealing with the Lancashire Witches, in the story, endorsing a role nearly as important as witchcraft. Another aspect taken up by Sharratt is the role of women, old women and beggars, describing in detail the poverty and despair not only of the narrating people and their families, but also of their neighbours and friends.

Witchcraft is also the main issue discussed in the novel. Sharratt keeps close to the contemporary description of Thomas Potts, who was present in the court of the historical trial. She included a great number of skills that the alleged witches were said to have possessed. While doing this, she further addresses two witch stereotypes. One is the image of the old and ugly hag, a frightful creature that raises wariness and hostility, and the other is the seductive femme fatale, who brings down man from their state of purity, tainting them.

The last section discusses how the novel might be implemented in the EFL classroom. After considering a number of criteria that are important when choosing a text to be used in class, such as level of language, age group, interest and relevance, probably the most appropriate concept of using it is in a WPF. Because of the language level of the book, as well as its length and complexity of the topics, a 7th or 8th grade needs to be taken into consideration. Due to its richness and intellectually demanding content, the novel provides an opportunity to foster individual work as well as the creation of a variety of tasks to develop several language skills and help students to work on their strengths and weaknesses.

8. References

- Ajideh, Parviz. "Schema Theory-based Pre-reading Tasks: A Neglected Essential in the ESL Reading Class". *The Reading Matrix* 3.1 (2003): 1-14.
- Behringer, Wolfgang. *Witches and Witch-Hunts*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004.
- Bever, Edward. "Old Age and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe." *Old Age in Pre-industrial Europa*. Ed. Peter Stearns. Princeton (NY): Holmes and Meyer, 1983. 150-190.
- Cobban, Jennie Lee. *The Lure of the Lancashire Witches*. Lancashire: Palatine Books, 2011.
- Fields, Kenneth. *Lancashire Magic & Mystery: Secrets of the Red Rose County*. Berlin: Sigma, 1998.
- Gareis, E., Allard, M., & Saindon, J. "The Novel as Textbook". *TESL Canada Journal*, 26.2 (2009): 136-147.
- Garrett, Clarke. "Women and Witches: Patterns of Analysis." *Signs* 3 (1977): 93-108.
- Gibson, Marion. *Witchcraft and Society in England and America, 1550-1750*. London: A&C Black, 2006.
- Goh, Christine. "Learner Strategies". *The Cambridge Guide to Pedagogy and Practice in Second Language Teaching*. Eds. A. Burns & J.C. Richards. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012. 68-76.
- Grimassi, Raven. *The Witch's Familiar: Spiritual Partnerships for Successful Magic*. Woodbury, Minnesota: Llewellyn Worldwide, 2003.
- Guiley, Rosemary Ellen. *The Encyclopedia of Witches & Witchcraft*. 2nd ed. New York: Checkmark Books, 1999.
- Hajizadeh, Rasool. "Teaching Novels to Improve EFL Skills: Useful Tips". *International Journal of Arts & Science* 4.18 (2011): 275-283.
- Hedge, Tricia. *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.
- Hole, Christina. "Some Instances of Image-Magic in Great Britain." *The Witch Figure*. Ed. Venetia Newall. London: Routledge, 1973. 80-94.
- Horsley, Richard A. "Who Were the Witches? The Social Roles of the Accused in the European Witch Trials." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9 (Nr. 4) (Spring 1979): 689-715.
- Khatib, Mohammad. "Literature in EFL/ESL Classroom". *English Language Teaching* 4.1 (2011): 201-208.
- Klarer, Mario. *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. London: Routledge, 1998.

- Lady Sabrina. *The Witch's Master Grimoire: An Encyclopedia of Charms, Spells, Formulas, and Magical Rites*. New Jersey: Career Press, 2001.
- Levack, Brian P. *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Longmans, 1987.
- . *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*. Oxon: Psychology Press, 2004.
- . *Witchcraft in England*. Articles on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology 6. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1992.
- Levin, Carole. *The Reign of Elizabeth I*. Basingstoke (Hampshire): Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.
- McDonald, S.W. "The Devil's Mark and the Witch-Prickers of Scotland." *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 90 (1997): 507-511.
- Macfarlane, A.D.J. "Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart Essex." *Crime in England 1550-1800*. Ed. J.S. Cockburn. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1977: 72-89.
- Poole, Robert. *The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster*. Lancaster: Palatine, 2011.
- . *The Lancashire Witches: Histories and Stories*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002.
- Ruether, Rosemary. "The Persecution of Witches: A Case of Sexism and Agism?" *Christianity and Crisis* 34 (1974): 291-295.
- Rushton, Peter. "A Note on the Survival of Popular Christian Magic." *Folklore* 91 (Nr.1) (1980): 115-118.
- Sharpe, Jim. *Witchcraft in Early Modern England*. London: Routledge, 2014.
- Sharratt, Mary. *Daughters of the Witching Hill*. First Mariner: Boston, 2010.
- Summers, Montague. *Witchcraft and Black Magic*. Chelmsford: Courier Corporation, 2000.
- Tierney, R.J.; Carter M.A.; Desai, E. *Portfolio Assessment in the Reading-Writing Classroom*. Norwood (Mass.): Christopher Gordon Publishers, 1991.
- Tsai, Chih-hsin. "Students' Perceptions of Using a Novel as Main Material in the EFL Reading Course". *English Language Teaching* 5.8 (2012): 103-112.
- Tyler, Philip. "The Church Courts at York and Witchcraft Prosecutions 1567-1640." *Northern History* 4 (1969): 84-110.
- Tyson, Donald. *The Demonology of King James I*. Woodbury (MN): Llewellyn Worldwide, 2012.

Widdowson, John. "The Witch as a Frightening and Threatening Figure." *The Witch Figure*. Ed. Venetia Newall. London: Routledge, 1973. 200-220.

8.1. Electronic Sources

BMBF. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen. 18 May 2015

<https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/lp_neu_ahs_01_11853.pdf?4dzgm2>.

BookBrowse. Morgan-Witts, Davina; Morgan-Witts, Paul. 2015. 7 March 2015

<https://www.bookbrowse.com/biographies/index.cfm/author_number/1863/mary-sharratt?>.

Bundeskanzleramt Rechtinformationssystem. Bundeskanzleramt. 18 May 2015

<<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008568>>.

Council of Europe Homepage. Council of Europe. 21 May 2015

<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp>.

Mary Sharratt. Books. Sharratt, Mary. 10 May 2015

<http://www.marysharratt.com/books_dwh_guide.html> .

Mary Sharratt. Writing women back into history. Sharratt, Mary. 2014. 7 March 2015.

<http://marysharratt.com/main/?page_id=68>.

Phoebe Boswell. Phoebe Boswell. 19 March 2015

<<http://www.phoebeboswell.com/page25.htm>>.

The Animatorium. 2013. 19 April 2015

<<http://the-animatorium.blogspot.co.at/2013/04/of-witches-femme-fatales-and-film-noir.html>>.

8.2. Pictures

Fig. 1: <http://simplysenia.com/2013/10/23/moons-witches-and-halloween-myths/> (14.5.2015)

Fig. 2: <https://www.pinterest.com/kabelov/smile/> (10.5.2015)

Fig. 3: <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/pendle-witch-child/> (14.5.2015)

Fig. 4: <http://rihsenglish.pbworks.com/w/page/6787343/SUPERSTITION> (18.5.2015)

9. Index

A

abilities 48
 agism 33
 Altham 37
 Anne Whittle *Siehe* Whittle
 Annie 6
 Assheton, Robert 7, 14, 15, 19, 41, 45, 47, 50, 55
 Astley, Elizabeth 35
 August Assizes 7

B

Baldwin, Richard 6, 9, 13, 55
 Ball 10
 beggars 2, 75
 Bierley, Ellen 35
 Bierley, Jennet 35
Bitch Lit 3
 blessing 4
 brainstorming 66, 70
 Bromley 35, 37, 38
 Bulcock 7, 19, 36, 38, 52
 burning 30, 32

C

cannibalism 1, 33
 Catholic 4, 16, 31, 35, 38, 43, 44, 47, 53
 charms 4, 20, 24, 35, 48, 54
 Chattox 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17, 36, 37, 39, 40,
 41, 42, 45, 46, 50, 51, 54
 clay images.. *Siehe* image magic, *Siehe* image magic
 Common European Frame of Reference 62
 Common Reference Levels 62
 cunning 4, 9, 20, 36, 41, 45, 48, 49, 75
 Curriculum 61

D

Dandy 37, 52, 53
 Demdike... 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16, 36, 38, 40, 42,
 45, 46, 48, 51, 54
Demonology 2, 28, 31, 32
 Device, Alison 5, 6, 8, 11, 15, 18, 36, 38, 41, 45, 47,
 52, 54, 55, *Device*
 Device, Elizabeth 36, 37
 Device, James 6, 12, 18, 36, 37, 38, 41, 52
 Device, Jennet 4, 7, 13, 18, 33, 36, 38
 Device, John 4, 10, 46, 51, 53, 74
 Device, Liza 4, 6, 10, 17, 41, 46
 Devil 6, 21, 22, 25, 26, 32, 33, 34, 44
 devil's mark 12, 22, 32
 discrimination 61
 divination 20, 22, 32

E

EFL 57, 59, 60, 75, 76
 Elizabeth Southernns *Siehe* Southernns
 examination 29
 extensive reading 57, 58

F

familiar spirits 4, 6, 9, 10, 20, 26, 32, 33, 40, 41, 44,
 50, 52
 Fancy 14, 50, 51
 Faust 62, 70
 Federal Ministry of Education 61
 femme fatale 2, 54, 55, 75
 Fox, George 7

G

Gallows Hill 4
 gender 61
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 62, 70
 Good Friday 6, 36
 Gray, Alice 7, 35, 36

H

Hargreaves 7
 Hay, Lawrence 35
 healer 20
 Hewitt, Katherine 36, 38
 Holden, Matthew 4
 Holden, Nancy 6
 Holgate, Christopher 9, 36

I

image magic 1, 25, 33, 41
 indictment 29
 information 29
 intensive reading 57

K

King James I 2, 4, 28, 31, 32, 33

L

Lancashire 1, 7, 17, 24, 28, 35, 40, 46, 75
 Lancaster 37
 Lancaster Assizes 1, 37, 38
 Lancaster Castle 6, 35, 36
 language improvement 59
 Law, John 6, 12, 38, 52
 Lister, Thomas 36

M

madness 1
 magic 5, 12, 20, 22, 25, 29, 41, 48, 49, 52, 53

magician..... 20, 25
Malkin Tower.... 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 18, 33, 36, 38, 41, 51
Mary I..... 31
mind-map 70
Mitton, Henry..... 38
motivation 59
Mouldheels..... 7, 38, 50
murder 1, 33

N

necromancer 20
neighbourhood 2, 44
neighbours 27, 34, 45
North Berwick witches..... 31
novel..... 58, 59, 60
Nowell, Roger 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 36, 41, 43, 55
Nutter, Alice..... 5, 6, 7, 16, 18, 33, 36, 38, 47
Nutter, Robert..... 37

O

old hag..... 2, 21, 54, 75

P

papist..... 5, 9
Pearson, Margaret 39, 47
Pearson, Meg..... 7
pedlar..... 12, 18, 36, 38, 41, 45, 55
Pendle..... 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 33, 35, 36, 40, 45, 47
Pendle Forest..... 1, 9, 16, 35
Pendle witches..... 1, 4
Philip II 31
portfolio..... 71, 72
post-reading activities 66
Potts, Thomas..... 17, 24, 32, 33, 35, 37, 48, 75
poverty 1, 4, 61, 75
powers 6
prayers..... 9, 24, 38, 42, 44
pre-reading tasks 66
presentation 72
Preston, Jennet 33, 36, 37, 38
pricking 23
prosecution 16
prostitute 6
Protestant..... 31
Puritan 40, 42, 55

Q

Quaker..... 7
Queen Elizabeth I..... 2, 4, 24, 31, 32
Queen of Elfhame 11, 43

R

Ramsden, John 35
reading skills 59
Redferne, Annie..... 5, 14, 15, 36, 37, 38, 40, 45, 47, 54, 55
Reformation 9
religion 9, 42, 45, 61, 75

rituals..... 4, 20, 32, 42, 48, 54
Robey, Isabel..... 39
Robinson, Edmund..... 18, 52

S

Sabbath..... 22, 33, 36, 37, 43, 52
Sabbaths 1
Salem..... 40
Samlesbury..... 2, 33, 35
sexism 33
Sharratt 3, 4
Sharratt, Mary 1, 7, 18, 40, 43, 48, 51, 52, 75
Shuttleworth 43
Sidegraves, Isabel..... 35
skills 57, 63, 65, 75
society 1, 33, 34, 40, 44, 47, 48, 54, 60, 75
sorcerer..... 20
sorcery 4, 29, 35
Southerns..... 1, 45, 48
Southerns, Elizabeth..... *Siehe* Southerns, *Siehe* Southerns, *Siehe* Southerns, *Siehe* Southerns
Southworth 43
Southworth, Jane 35
Sowerbutts, Grace 35
spells 20, 24, 50
Standardized guidelines..... 61
stereotypes..... 2, 54, 75
strategies..... 58, 65, 67
Strong Advantage Level..... 63
Strong Threshold..... 62
superstition 1, 2, 21, 40, 47, 61

T

teaching 57
textbook..... 59
Thompson..... 35
Threshold Level 62
Tibb 4, 9, 40, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54
Towneley..... 43, 44, 53
trial 1, 4, 6
trials..... 13, 18, 25, 40, 43, 52

V

Vantage Level 63
vocabulary log..... 72

W

Wahlpflichtfach..... 62, 70, 76
while-reading activity..... 66
white magic 5
Whittle, Anne..... *Siehe* Whittles, *Siehe* Whittles, *Siehe* Whittles
Whittle, Betty 50, *Siehe* Whittles, *Siehe* Whittles, *Siehe* Whittles
Whittles 1
witch 5, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 33, 48, 50, 54
Witch of Endor..... 28

witchcraft . 1, 2, 9, 11, 13, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27,
 29, 35, 36, 37, 39, 48, 49, 53, 55, 61, 71, 73, 75
 witchcraft statute 28, 29
 witches 48
 witch-hunt 2, 26, 31
 witch-persecution 26, 33, 61, 75

witch-prosecution 2, 32
 witch-trials 1, 34
 women 2, 33, 47, 75

Y

York Assizes 1, 36

10. Appendix

Worksheet #1

PORTFOLIO

“DAUGHTERS OF THE WITCHING HILL”

Tasks for the Portfolio

- a. Write a summary of the story (maximum 500 words, less is more)
- b. Collect information about the author and write a text of about 300 words about him/her. Give your sources of information!
- c. Choose 3 characters from the book and describe/characterize them in no more than 300 words each (max. ½ page)
- d. Write 2 letters (150 words each) from the view of one character in the book, on different occasions in the book, addressed to someone with absolutely no knowledge of the situation. Try to take two completely different situations! Include the basic facts about what just happened, the feelings of the characters and their inner thoughts. You should also include what you think the person felt, but has not been said in the book, not simply copy from the novel!
- e. You have to interview one character of the book (choose a different one as in the task before!) (at least 100 words)
- f. Explain what you liked/disliked about the book and why. Why would you recommend/not recommend the book? (100 words or more)

- g. Write an alternative ending. Do this in form of a diary entry from the point of view of a character of your choice, who retells the events after Alizon paralyzes the beggar. (at least 300 words)
- h. Choose 2 questions from Worksheet #2 and summarize what we discussed in class!
- i. Include a list of words that you had to look up in the dictionary and that you learned by reading the book. Create a Vocabulary Log!
- j. In groups: You will give a presentation on a topic concerning the book. You will receive further information in class. Keep in mind the useful phrases handed out in class!

➤ Finish and include all handouts handed out to you!

Hand in until _____



18

Worksheet #2¹⁹

Below you find a number of questions concerning „Daughters of the Witching Hill“!

- While reading the book, be sure to take some notes
- The questions will be discussed in class
- Summarize what we discussed in class (two questions)



20

1. What did you learn about life in northern England during this time?
2. Bess Southernns earned her living by using her folk charms to heal humans and livestock. She practiced her craft for decades before anyone dared to interfere with her. Only at the age of eighty, near the end of her long and productive career, was she arrested on witchcraft charges. What do you think might be a reason for this?
3. Unlike many other accused witches in historical trials, Bess freely admitted to being a cunning woman, and she even bragged to the magistrate about her familiar spirit, Tibb, who appeared to her in the guise of a beautiful young man. Why didn't Bess try to save herself by denying the accusations?
4. Who, or what, is Tibb, Bess's familiar spirit? Do you see him as good, evil, or neutral? Does he ultimately benefit Bess or lead her into tragedy?
5. The cunning craft Bess practiced shows her faith in the power of Catholic prayer charms combined with folk beliefs in familiar spirits and the Fairy Folk. How does Bess's beliefs differ from that of her fellow accused witch, Alice Nutter, a Catholic, who hides outlawed priests in her manor house?
6. Bess Southernns was so terrifying to her foes because she was a woman who embraced her perceived supernatural powers wholeheartedly. In contrast, her daughter Liza eventually rejects her powers, while Alizon, Bess's granddaughter, views her own rising powers with terror and appears to do everything she can to deny them. Why is Alizon so reluctant to embrace her own power? What price does Alizon pay for this rejection? Do you identify more with Bess or Alizon?

¹⁹ Some questions taken or inspired by:

http://www.marysharratt.com/books_dwh_guide.html (10.5.2015).

²⁰ Fig. 2

7. After Bess instructs her best friend, Chattox, on the craft, Chattox turns to dark magic. Is it alright for Chattox to use dark powers to protect her daughter, Anne Redfearn, from rape when she knows the authorities will do nothing to help her? What would you have done in Chattox's situation?
8. Alizon's brother, Jamie, suffers from learning difficulties. Outside the circle of his loving family, people call him an idiot and treat him callously. How does his disability shape his fate?
9. What do you think of magistrate Roger Nowell and his actions? Why is he so obsessed with witch-hunting?
10. After Bess and Alizon's arrest and imprisonment in Lancaster Castle, their worried family and friends meet at Malkin Tower. Roger Nowell accuses them of being a coven of witches. Why is it so important for Nowell to convince the authorities of this? Why does Nowell spare Bess's son Kit and his family?
11. How did ordinary people go from living next to each other quietly to accusing their own family, friends and neighbours?
12. What do you think of nine-year-old Jenet Device and her betrayal of her family? What do you think happened to her after the trial that saw her mother and siblings hanged for witchcraft?
13. What enduring message does the Pendle Witch Tragedy have for people of our time?
14. Do the characters in the book differ from how you would imagine a witch? Why? Why not?

Worksheet #3

Giving a presentation

How to plan your presentation:

- collect ideas, structure your ideas (mind map / table)
- plan your presentation: who is going to present what?
- write a note card
- revise your texts, then hand them to your teacher, revise again
- practice your presentation

While giving the presentation:

- write new vocabulary on the board before you start with your presentation
- keep eye contact with your audience
- speak slowly and loud enough
- you can use your note card

After the presentation:

- ask for questions

Useful expressions for your presentation (not all might fit in your topic!):

- Today we'd like to give you a presentation on.../ tell you about.....
- Today I'm going to talk about....
- When.../ after that...../then.../some time later.../ in the end.../ finally....
- I liked.../ I disliked (didn't like....)..... because....

-on the one hand...but on the other hand.....

-I think / my opinion is that.... / in my opinion....

-To sum up.... / on the whole..... / all in all I would say that....

-I hope you have enjoyed my presentation. Thank you for listening. Are there any questions?

Your checklist / how to evaluate the talk

The presenter

- spoke clearly, slowly and loud enough
- explained difficult words
- used notes to speak freely and kept eye contact to the audience
- could answer the questions

Worksheet #4

“The Pendle Witch Child”²¹



22

You will see a documentary about the famous “Lancashire Witches”. Try to gather as much information as you can on an extra sheet of paper!

1. When did the trial take place?
2. What was so special about the witness? Who was she and what relationship did she have to the accused?
3. Give details on Jennet Device!
4. Who was on the throne at this time? Why was he so paranoid?
5. How did Jennet’s family earn their living?
6. What is a cunning woman?
7. Who was Chattox?
8. What can you say about the religious situation?
9. What happened on March 18th 1612?
10. What could have been a logical explanation of what happened to the pedlar?
11. What did Alizon do when Nowell interrogated her?
12. What did James I think had the North Berwick Witches done?
13. What happened on Good Friday at Malkin Tower? What was the problem about it?
14. Who was Alice Nutter?
15. “The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster” by Thomas Potts is our main source of information today. Where did Potts get his information from?
16. What happened to Demdike?
17. What was special about Elizabeth Device?
18. Can you name some of the things that Jennet accused the prisoners of?
19. Were the witches innocent? What speaks for and against it?
20. How were most of the witches to be punished?

²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yv-JDUfADiw> (12.5.2015).

²² Fig. 3

Worksheet #5

Presentations

“Daughters of the Witching Hill”

After you have finished reading the book, you will now get together in **groups of 3-4** to give a presentation on **one** of the following topics:

- Characters and Characterization:
 - Give an overview of all characters in the book and explain their relationship with each other!
 - Major vs minor characters (use the knowledge you gained in class - > Worksheet)
 - You can also use paragraphs from the book
- Setting & historical background:
 - Analysis of the historical background of the story: When does the story take place?
 - Are there any dates or other clues in the text?
 - Provide some interesting information about the region (Pendle & Lancashire)
 - You can also use paragraphs from the book
- Witchcraft:
 - What is the difference between a cunning woman and a witch?
 - List all instances of magic in the book: which are “white” magic and which “dark”? Why?
 - Give examples

- Make a historical connection: describe the spells, what is to be done? What effects do they have? Can you find out some of the rituals' origins?
- You can also use paragraphs from the book

-> You have 10 minutes for your presentation

-> Use some creative utensils (Powerpoint, Overhead, Pictures, role-play, film,...), and provide a hand-out! Make sure to collect each hand-out and add it to your portfolio!

Worksheet #6

Analysing Characters – A revision

Major Characters	Minor Characters
Dynamic characters	Static characters
Have layers	Can be described in one sentence
Likely to surprise you	No depth
Have depth, like real people	Specific or minor function in the text
One (protagonist) or more	Often simplified stereotypes
Round characters	Flat characters
Possibly a viewpoint character	Usually not a viewpoint character
If not protagonist -> often have own subplot	Appearance brief and infrequent
3-dimensional (round)	2-dimensional (flat)

Superstition

In the novel “Daughters of the Witching Hill” there are many cases where people, who were not witches, used their own kind of magic. Reread this passage about John:

“Though he was no cunning man himself, he wasted no time in drawing upon his own charms of protection, clambering upon a ladder to hang a horseshoe and a rowan cross over our door at Malkin Tower. To safeguard his master’s cattle, he nailed three horseshoes over the shippon door, and behind that door he hung a sickle and a rowan switch, behind each beam a bit of cold iron. When he drove the cattle out to graze, he tied holed stones round their necks to guard them from black magic and lightning besides. Fearful for Liza’s condition, he had her wear a twisted iron nail on a string hidden down her smock to keep her and the baby safe. Of an evening he threw salt in the fire to banish the evil eye.” (Sharratt 78)

This passage lists a number of magical traditions and superstitions. Some are still practiced today.

- What kind of superstitious beliefs come to your mind?
- Are you superstitious yourself?
- Have you had experiences with superstition?

Discuss this with your partner and share your results with the rest of the class!



²³ Fig. 4

11. Abstract

The case of the Lancashire witches of 1612 is one of the most important witchcraft-trials in English history. It gained its prominence not only for its considerable number of victims, twelve alleged witches were accused, eleven survived their time in Lancaster gaol to be tried and eight people were executed, but also because a detailed account by the clerk at the law court of the trial, Thomas Potts, has survived. The trial ended in eight people being condemned and hanged. Child-witnesses provided the main evidence, nine-year old Jennet Device in the case of the alleged witches of Pendle Forest, and fourteen-year old Grace Sowerbutts in the case of the alleged witches from the area of Samlesbury. While Grace Sowerbutts confessed under strict interrogation, that her allegations were untrue, Jennet Device held strong in her accusations.

Early 17th century society played an important role when it came to witchcraft beliefs and accusations. Due to a troublesome time, shaped by political and religious changes, as well as catastrophes, prosecution and poverty, tension grew among the people of England, evoking fear and mistrust. People, especially females, who could not maintain their role in society often turned to outsiders and served as scapegoats for superstitious thinking and personal loss.

The aim of this thesis is to explore how society and witchcraft interplay in the novel *Daughters of the Witching Hill* by Mary Sharratt. The novel presents the story of the Pendle witches in a completely new light by giving them their own voice. Through the 1st person point of view of two of the main alleged witches, Sharratt evokes immediacy and portrays social constellations and family relations and their connection to witchcraft and superstition.

The thesis first provides a concise author's, a brief synopsis of the book, explores the different characters and their function in the novel and compares them to their historical counterparts. Next, a definition and elaboration of the relevant terms, as well as an overview of the most important facts of the witch-hunts of the 16th and 17th century and a discussion of the historical background concerning the reigns of Elisabeth I and James I, the trials and society at the time of witch prosecution in early 17th century England provides the factual reference frame for the critical reading of the novel.

In the last chapter, the relevance of literature in the EFL classroom, the use of novels and its benefits for students are discussed. Furthermore, an example of how the novel can be implemented in the EFL classroom, as well as concrete lesson plans and appropriate worksheets are provided.

12. German Abstract

Der Fall der Hexenprozesse von Lancashire im Jahre 1612 ist einer der bedeutendsten der englischen Geschichte. Dieser erlangte seine Einzigartigkeit einerseits durch die große Anzahl der Opfer, denn zwölf Menschen wurden der Hexerei beschuldigt, davon neun Frauen und zwei Männer, wobei elf von ihnen ihren Prozesstag erlebten, und andererseits durch die präzise Niederschrift des Prozesses durch den Gerichtsschreiber Thomas Potts. Durch das Urteil verloren acht Menschen ihr Leben durch den Strang. Als schwerwiegendste Beweise dienten, im Falle der Hexen von Pendle, die Aussagen der erst neun Jahre alten Jennet Device, die dadurch den Großteil ihrer Familie ausrottete, und im Falle der Samlesbury Hexen die Geschichten der vierzehn-jährigen Grace Sowerbutts. Während Grace im Kreuzverhör zerbrach und gestand, dass ihre Geschichten nicht der Wahrheit entsprachen, hielt Jennet dem Kreuzverhör stand und beteuerte bis zuletzt die Korrektheit ihrer Angaben.

Das soziale Umfeld des frühen siebzehnten Jahrhunderts spielte eine zentrale Rolle, wenn es um den Glauben an Hexerei und dessen Verfolgung geht. Aufgrund turbulenter Zeiten, die von stetigen politischen und folglich auch religiösen Veränderungen, Katastrophen, Verfolgung und Armut geprägt waren, entwickelte und verstärkte sich eine gewisse Anspannung in der Bevölkerung, die Angst und Misstrauen mit sich trug. Wenn es Personen, vor allem Frauen, nicht möglich war ihren Platz in der Gesellschaft zu bewahren, führte dies oft dazu, dass diese als Außenseiter verstoßen, und als Sündenbock verurteilt wurden. Oft waren die Gründe dafür reiner Aberglaube und persönliche Verluste, Schäden oder erlittenes Unheil seitens der Kläger.

Das Ziel dieser Diplomarbeit ist es, auf Grund einer werksimmanenten und werkstranzendenten Analyse zu zeigen, in welcher Art und Weise und in welchem Ausmaß Hexenkunde und Gesellschaft in dem Buch *Daughters of the Witching Hill* von Mary Sharratt, zusammenspielen. Das besondere am Werk von Mary Sharratt ist es, dass die Geschichte die erzählt wird, vom Gesichtspunkt von zwei der berühmtesten Hexen von Pendle geschildert wird. Durch diesen erzähltechnischen Ansatz wird es möglich, die sozialen Konstellationen, sowie familiäre Geschehnisse und deren Verknüpfung zu Hexerei und Aberglaube, in authentischen, wenn auch subjektiven Licht darzulegen.

Die Studie bietet zuerst einen Überblick über das Leben und Werk der Autorin Mary Sharratt, und danach eine kurze inhaltliche Zusammenfassung von *Daughters of the Witching Hill*. Weiters werden die Charaktere, wie sie im Buch dargestellt sind, sowie ihre Rollen in der Erzählung, genauer erläutert, bevor einige wichtige Fakten zu den historischen Persönlichkeiten gegeben werden.

Des weiteren werden die relevanten Termini und Phänomene der Hexenverfolgung und des Hexenglaubens erläutert. Ebenso wird ein historischer Überblick über die Herrschaft von Elizabeth I und James I, die Hexenprozesse der Hexen von Pendle und der Hexen von Samlesbury, und die gesellschaftliche Entwicklung im frühen 17. Jahrhundert gegeben.

Im letzten Kapitel wird die Relevanz von Literatur im Unterricht diskutiert, und schließlich ein Vorschlag präsentiert, wie das Buch in den Fremdsprachenunterricht einer allgemein höheren Schule eingegliedert werden kann. Ein angefertigtes Stundenbild sowie Arbeitsblätter bieten ein mögliches Beispiel solcher Unterrichtssequenzen.

13. Curriculum Vitae

Persönliche Daten

- Sandra
- Führer
- 03.03.1991
- Kapuzinergasse 34, 2020 Hollabrunn
- 0650 7980568.
- E-mail : sandra.fuehrer@yahoo.at

Schul Ausbildung

1997-2001	Volksschule Koliskopplatz Hollabrunn
2001-2009	Erzbischöfliches Real- und Aufbaugymnasium Hollabrunn (mit humanbiologischem Schwerpunkt)
2009	Maturaabschluss

Studienverlauf

2009-2015

Diplomstudium Lehramt Studienschwerpunkte:

- Englisch • Psychologie • Philosophie

Titel der Diplomarbeit: • Society and Witchcraft in Mary „Sharratt’s Daughters of the Witching Hill“

Weitere Qualifikationen

Bachelor of Arts (English and American Studies) (Endphase)