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# The Fancy on Witches in the Nineteenth Century Viewing from The Lancashire Witches

*Kumiko Tanabe*
*(Osaka University of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Japan)*

**Abstract:** William Harrison Ainsworth is a historical novelist, whose novel The Lancashire Witches was serialized in the Sunday Times newspaper in 1848. This serialization was based on the story about the witches who are said to have lived on Pendle Hill in Lancashire and were executed in 1612. It was published as a novel called The Lancashire Witches: A Romance of Pendle Forest in 1829. Ainsworth had been gathering information about Pendle Hill from between 1846 and 1847, and wrote his novel based on a public document called The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster (1613) published by Thomas Potts as a clerk of this trial. The subject of the Lancashire Witches was suggested to Ainsworth by James Crossley as the president of Chetham Society, which published the books on the history of north-east England. The Lancashire Witches displays a lot of Lancashire dialect spoken by folks and the landscape and architecture on Pendle Hill with antiquarian knowledge, which reveals the fashion of antiquarianism and the influence of Chetham Society. Ainsworth's style including fancy or fantasy into history to recreate it became the model for modern fantasy and historical fiction.

**Key words:** fancy, reality and disbelief in witches, W. H. Ainsworth, the nineteenth century, Lancashire, Burne-Jones, Pre-Raphaelites

## 1. Introduction

William Harrison Ainsworth was a historical novelist, whose novel *The Lancashire Witches* was serialized in the *Sunday Times* newspaper in 1848. This serialization was based on the real story about the witches who are said to have lived on Pendle Hill in Lancashire and were executed in 1612. At the trial, the witches admitted their crime of harming the people in the district with witchcraft. It was published as a novel called *The Lancashire Witches: A Romance of Pendle Forest* in 1849, which became his greatest hit. Ainsworth, who was almost as popular as Charles Dickens at that time, had been gathering information about Pendle Hill from between 1846 and 1847, and wrote his novel based on a public document called *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster* (1613), published by Thomas Potts as a clerk of this trial. The story of thewitches of Pendle has been fascinating various authors, and several novels about it have been published. It is said to have inspired Shakespeare when he visited Lancashire with his company in the seventeenth century to write about three witches in *Macbeth* (Richard Wilson, 2002, pp. 126–145). Various events for the anniversary commemorating the witches were held in Lancaster and on Pendle Hill in 2012, the 400-year anniversary of their trial in 1612.

Kumiko Tanabe, Ph.D., Lecturer, Osaka University of Pharmaceutical Sciences; research areas/interests: British literature and culture. E-mail: k.tanabe@gly.oups.ac.jp.

The subject of *the Lancashire Witches* was suggested to Ainsworth by James Crossley, as his long-time friend and the president of the Chetham Society, which published journalson the history of north-west England. Between 1846 and 1847, Ainsworth visited all the places concerning this story such as Pendle Hill and Malkin Tower, home of the Demdikes, one of the two families accused of practising witchcraft before the novel was serialized in The *Sunday Times.* On completion of the novel, he was paid £1,000 (equivalent to £92,000 in 2016) and the copyright reverted to him (Jeffrey Richards, 2002, p. 168). This tellsus how popular the serialised novel wasamong Victorian readers. It was thenpublished in a three-volume set, known as a triple decker, in 1849. Ainsworth basedmost of the story on the description by Potts, who also appears as a cunning lawyer in the novel.

The aim of this paper is to consider how the descriptions of witches by Ainsworth is different from the original in order to see the viewpoint of the nineteenth century English people with much common sense who does not believe in them in reality but dream of them in fancy or fantasy.

## 2. The Original Story of Pendle Witches in the Seventeenth Century

The twelve accused people in the most famous witch trial in English history lived close toPendle Hill in Lancashire. They were said to have murdered ten people with witchcraft. After deliberation at Lancaster Assizes on the 18th and 19th August, 1612, eleven people were sentenced to death with a judgement of "guilty". At that time, Thomas Potts was a clerk to Lancaster Assizes, ordered to write a book of minutes by the trial judges Sir James Altham and Sir Edward Bromley. He was lodging in Chancery Lane in London, brought up in the home of Thomas Knyvet, who in 1605 was credited with apprehending Guy Fawkes in his attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament and thus saving the life of King James I (Richard Wilson, 2002, p. 139). Fawkes had been converted to Catholicism, took part in a planned assassination of King James Iand members of the assembly with gunpowder set in the cellar underthe Houses of Parliament. This incident was relatedto the witch trial in Lancashire. Only a few years after the Gunpowder Plot, publication of the book *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster,* the account of the trials by Potts, met with the King's approval, and he was granted a position that gave him the authority to appoint deputies in 1618 (Steven Pumfrey, 2002, p. 38). However, the account of the trials by Potts do not record the exact words spoken by the accused as the records of trials do at the present time, so the credibility as to whether the Pendle witches actually practised witchcraft is somewhat dubious. Concerningthe incident, justices of the peace manufactured the evidence that Pendle witches also plotted to blow up Lancaster Castle. Therefore, it was significant for Potts that he offered *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches* to Knyvet and his wife.

The origin of *The Lancashire Witches* isthe conflict between two families, headed by a woman in her eighties, Demdike and Chattox. The real name of the former was Elizabeth Southerns and the real name of the latter was Anne Whittle. The other members of Demdike's family who were involved were her daughter Elizabeth Device, and her grandchildren James and Alizon Device. The other member of Chartox's family was her daughter, Anne Redferne. Another accused as a witch was Alice Nutter.

## 3. The Reality that Influenced Ainsworth's Description of the Witches of Pendle

The first book of *The Lancashire Witches* begins with the description of the religious background: the pilgrimage of grace that began in Yorkshire in 1536 during the reign of Henry VIII, before spreading to other parts of Northern England, as a protest against a break with the Roman Catholic Church and the Dissolution of the Monasteries (Claire Cross, 2013). John Paslew, abbot of Whalley Abbey, was executed, and the story begins with

the curse on the offspring of Demdike who had set a trap for him. In fact, among the people who were sentenced to death as Pendle witches were Catholics, and it is possible that they were accused as witches for their religious background. At the end of the sixteenth century, Pendle Hill in Lancashire was regarded as a lawless area, adistrict where theft and violence went unchallenged and the people worshipped the doctrine of the church without fully understanding it. After the Reformation by Henry VIII, the Protestants suppressed the Catholics. Henry dissolved the nearby Cistercian abbey at Whalley in 1537, which was strongly resisted by the local people because the abbey had until then exerted a powerful influence on their lives. In 1553, Queen Mary I ascended the throne as Queen of England, and converted England to the Roman Catholic Church. In spite of the execution of the abbot, the people living around Pendle were loyal to the doctrine of the Catholic church, so they reverted to Catholicism soon after the coronation of Queen Mary. However, the reign of Queen Mary lasted for only five years. After the coronation of Elizabeth I in 1558, who was a Protestant, Catholic priests had to go into hiding, and secretly read mass in Pendle. In 1562, Elizabeth passed a law in the form of an Act Against Conjurations, Enchantments and Witchcrafts. The Act provided that anyone who should "use, practice, or exercise any Witchcraft, Enchantment, Charm, or Sorcery, whereby any person shall happen to be killed or destroyed", was to be put to death (Marion Gibson, 2002, pp. 3–4). After the death of Elizabeth in 1603, King James I, of England as the son of Scottish Queen Mary Stuart and Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley ascended to the throne. He held a religious congress at Hampton Court in 1604 to strengthen the connection with the Anglican Church but lost the support of both Puritans and Catholics, and then the Gunpowder Plot occurred in 1605.

Ainsworth describes how King James I hated both Puritans and Catholics:

> Itwas well known that the reigning monarch, James the First, inclined the other way, and, desirous of checking the growing spirit of Puritanism throughout the kingdom, had openly expressed himself in favour of honest recreation after sairinfested wi' folk inclining to Puritanism and Papistry, baith of which sects are adverse to the cause of true religion…." (Book the Third, Chapter VII, p. 568).

In the quotation above, the "true religion" means Anglicanism. King James I was deeply interested in Protestant theology especially about witchcraft, and firmly believed that Scottish witches were trying to take his life. When he visited Denmark, he attended the North Berwick witch trials in 1590 and was heavily influenced by his personal involvement in them. They were judged to be responsiblefor using witchcraft to have sent storms to the ship carrying James and his wife Anne on their way to Scotland. Following the executions of the witches in 1591, the news of the trials was narrated in a pamphlet titled *Newes from Scotland.* King James I wrote the book titled *Daemonologie* in 1597, which is a philosophical dissertation on contemporary necromancy and the historical relationships between the various methods of divination used from ancient black magic. It was a political and theological statement to educate a populace on the history, practices and implications of sorcery and the reasons for persecuting a witch in a Christian society under the rule of canonical law, leading to the prosecution of witches. In 1604, King James I enacted a law to execute those who harm people with witchcraft or dig up a corpse for witchcraft.

In early 1612, every justice of the peace (JP) in Lancashire was ordered to compile a list of recusants in their area. Roger Nowellof Read Hall, on the edge of Pendle Forest, was the JP for Pendle. It was against this background of seeking out religious nonconformists that, in March 1612, Norwell investigated a complaint made to him by the family of John Law, a peddler, who claimed to have been injured by witchcraft (James Sharpe, 2002, pp. 1–2). Many of those who subsequently became implicated as the investigation progressed, considered themselves to be witches, in the sense of being village healers who practiced magic in return for payment. Such people were common in

sixteenth-century England, and were accepted as part of village life (Jonathan Lumby, 1999, p. 67). One of the accused, Demdike, had been regarded in the area as a witch for fifty years. The event that seems to have triggered Norwell's investigation, culminating in the Pendle witch trials, occurred on 21 March 1612 (James Sharpe, 2002, p. 1). On her way to Trawden Forest, Demdike's granddaughter, Alizon Device, encountered John Law, a pedlarfrom Halifax, and asked him for some pins (Walter Bennett, 1993, p. 9). Seventeenth-century metal pins were handmade and relatively expensive, but they were frequently needed for magical purposes, such as in healing, divination, and for love magic (Joyce Froome, 2010, p. 5). A few minutes after their encounter, Alizon saw Law stumble, but he managed to reach a nearby inn (Joyce Froome, 2010, p. 11).

Alizon Device, her mother Elizabeth, and her brother James were summoned to appear before Norwell on 30 March 1612. Alizon confessed that she had sold her soul to the Devil, and that she had told him to lame John Law after he had called her a thief. Her brother, James, stated that his sister had also confessed to bewitching a local child. Elizabeth admitted that her mother, Demdike, had a mark on her body. Alizon accused Chattox of murdering four men by witchcraft, and of killing her father, John Device. On 2nd April 1612, Demdike, Chattox and Chattox's daughter Anne Redferne were summoned to appear before Norwell. Both Demdike and Chattox were blind in their eighties. Demdike claimed that she had given her soul to the Devil twenty years previously, and Chattox that she had given her soul to "a Thing like a Christian man" (Walter Bennett, 1993, p. 15). Although Redferne made no confession, Demdike said that she had seen her making clay figures. Margaret Crooke, another witness seen by Norwell that day, claimed that her brother had fallen sick and died after having had a disagreement with Redferne, and that he had frequently blamed her for his illness (Rachel Hasted, 1993, pp. 17–19). Based on the evidence and confessions he had obtained, Norwell committed Demdike, Chattox, Anne Redferne and Alizon Device to Lancaster Gaol, to be tried for *maleficium* (causing harm by witchcraft) at the next assizes (Walter Bennett, 1993, p. 16). The committal and subsequent trial of the four women might have been the end of the matter, had it not been for a meeting organized by Elizabeth Device at Malkin Tower, the home of Demdike (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 19), held on Good Friday 10th April 1612 (James Sharpe, 2002, p. 2). On 27th April 1612, an inquiry was held before Norwell and another magistrate, Nicholas Bannister, to determine the purpose of the meeting at Malkin Tower (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 19), who had attended, and what had happened there. As a result of the inquiry, eight more people were accused of witchcraft and committed for trial: Elizabeth Device, James Device, Alice Nutter, Katherine Hewitt, John Bulcock, Jane Bulcock, Alice Grey and Jennet Preston.

Alizon Device seem to have believed in their guilt, but others protested their innocence to the end. Nine-year-old Jennet Device was a key witness for the prosecution, something that would not have been permitted in many other seventeenth-century criminal trials (though in fact she may have been eleven or twelve years old in 1612 as she was baptized in 1600). However, King James had made a case for suspending the normal rules of evidence for witchcraft trials in his *Daemonologie* (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 28). As well as identifying those who attended the Malkin Tower meeting, Jennet also gave evidence against her mother, brother and sister. Nine of the accused including Alizon Device, Elizabeth Device, James Device, Anne Whittle (Chattox), Anne Redferne and Alice Nutter were found guilty during the two-day trial and hanged at Gallows Hill in Lancaster on 20 August 1612 (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 23). Demdike died while awaiting trial. Shewas described by Potts as having a facial deformity that leaves "the left eye standing lower than the other, the one looking down and the other looking up", which influenced Ainsworth's description of her in *The Lancashire Witches*: "Though of hideous and forbidding aspect, and with one eye lower set than the other, she had subtlety enough to induce a young man named Sothernes to marry her, and two children, a son and a daughter, were the fruit of the union" (*The Lancashire Witches* 326–327).

When Jennet Device was brought into the courtroom and asked to give evidence against her mother, Elizabeth began to curse and scream at her daughter, forcing the judges to have her removed from the courtroom (Peter Davies, 1971). Jennet stated that she believed her mother had been a witch for three or four years. She also said her mother had a familiar called Ball, who appeared in a shape of a brown dog. Jennet claimed to have witnessed conversations between Ball and her mother, in which Ball had been asked to help with various murders. James Device also gave evidence against his mother, saying he had seen her making a clay figure of one of her victims, John Robinson (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 29). Elizabeth Device was found guilty (Peter Davies, 1971, p. 55). James Device pleaded not guilty to the murders by witchcraft of Anne Townley and John Duckworth. However, he had earlier made a confession to Nowell, which was read out in court. The evidence presented against him by his sister Jennet, who said that she had seen her brother asking a black dog he had conjured up to help him kill Townley, was sufficient to persuade the jury to find him guilty (Peter Davies, 1971, pp. 65, 70). At that time, it was believed that witches corrupted beer and food, had dogs and cats as their familiars, and made clay figures of the people to murder them by breaking the figures, so this evidence lent credibility to the belief that they were witches.

Alice Nutter was unusual amongthe accused in being comparatively wealthy, the widow of a tenant yeoman farmer. She made no statement either before or during her trial, except to enter her plea of not guilty to the charge of murdering Henry Mitton by witchcraft. The prosecution alleged that she, together with Demdike and Elizabeth Device, had caused Mitton's death after he had refused to give Demdike a penny she had begged from him. Jennet Device stated that Alice had been present at the Malkin Tower meeting (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 34). Alice may have simplycalled on the meeting at Malkin Tower on her way to a secret Good Friday Catholic service, and refused to speak for fear ofincriminating her fellow Catholics. Many of the Nutter family were Catholics, and two had been executed as Jesuit priests, John Nutter in 1584 and his brother Robert in 1600 (Walter Bennett, 1993, p. 29). Alice Nutter was found guilty (Peter Davies, 1971, p. 116).

Alizon was confronted in court by John Law. She seems to have genuinely believed in her own guilt. When Law was brought into court Alizon fell to her knees in tears and confessed (Rachel Hasted, 1993, p. 37). She was found guilty (Peter Davies, 1971, p. 139). Having played her part in the deaths of her mother, brother, and sister, Jennet Device may eventually have found herself accused of witchcraft in 1634, 22 years after the witch trials in Lancashire (Alison Findlay, 2002, pp. 146–165), and she was said to have died in prison two years after the trial. The chief prosecution witness was a ten-year-old boy, Edmund Robinson.

It is said that the number of the witches who were executed under the witch trials in England between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries was less than 500. As Pendle was a part of the parish of Whalley with an area of 470 square kilometers, it was too vast for the doctrine of the Anglican Church to spread. Such a vast parish allowedCatholics tosurvive with a lack of moral senseafter the dissolution of Whalley Abbey in 1537, leading up to the trials of the Pendle witches. Thus, there was this strong influence of Catholicism around Lancashire.

Though Ainsworth himself was not a Catholic, he seems to idealize Catholicism as a part of theEnglish past. His love of traditioninseparable from the religion in this district can be seen in his so-called seven "Lancashire novels" including *The Lancashire Witches*.

In Ainsworth's novel, some settings are different from the account by Potts: the name of Chattox's daughter is changed to "Nance" as the nickname of "Anne" who is Chattox's granddaughter while Alizon is found to be the real daughter of Nutter who is not a witch. The disturbance against the witches of Pendle is due to the fact that they had to pretend to be witches for the means of their livelihood. The reason why the Demdikes and Chattox competed with each other claiming that they were genuine witches is that they had to arouse awe in the people living around

Pendle Hill, believing that they havesupernatural powers in order to make their living by healing, begging and extortion.

## 4. Realistic Viewand Fancy on Witches in the Nineteenth Century Related to the Lancashire Witches

The witch hunts came to an end in the eighteenth century. Moreover, in the Victorian era, with the development of science and industry, Darwinism contributed to the lack of belief in Christianity. The idea of the absence of God also brought in the disbelief in devils and witches against God. In fantasy, such as in literature and art, however, witches inspired artists in later periods. Witches appeared in the works of Romantic poets like John Keats and S. T. Coleridge and are also related to the fashion of Gothic novels. The popularity of *The Lancashire Witches* proves that Victorian people were still interested in witches and witch trials, and this can also be said ofthe present 21st century with the rapid progress of science. The element of fancy in children's literature duringthe nineteenth and twentieth centuries led to the creation of the genre of fantasy. The words "fancy" and "fantasy" often appear in *The Lancashire Witches*, and the name of the devil as the familiar of Chattox is called "Fancy", which is based on the record of Potts in *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches.* Victorian literature seems to have issued a warning against the tendency that attached too much importance to reason by emphasizing fancy.

From the point of view of the historical description, it is dubious whether Potts truly recorded the evidenceand facts as he probably framed an innocent people called Pendle witches togain favor with King James I, and this shows that history can be created by religious and political situations of the people who write official documents. Originally there was no understanding of witches who sold their souls to devils and went to Sabbat: this was derived from the European continent, and King James I presented the idea to connect witches with the Devil in *Demonologie.* After Potts had added this idea to his record of the witch trials, Ainsworth also described Sabbat as the meeting of witches with the Devil, adding the element of Gothic novels according to the taste of Victorian readers. With the influence of his friends S. T. Coleridge and Robert Southey as Romantic poets, his novel has romantic sentimentalism in describing the psychology of the characters.

In *The Lancashire Witches*, the names of the characters are the same as the witches actually accused in the trials, but their settings with a difference from the fact are mostly created by Ainsworth. Alizon, who was a beggar and a daughter of an ugly witch in the record of Potts, becomes a heroine with beautiful appearance and heart, and is not a witch, contrary to the evidence of the actual trial. In the first half of the story, Alizon is beautifully dressed to act as the May Queen. In England, the maypole is installed on May Day, which is decorated with flowers, round which people traditionally dance, holding long ribbons attached to the top of the pole. This is the ancient heretical ritual to wish for a prolific growth of a grain crop, and the date is the same as one of Sabbats. In addition, Good Friday on which the meeting at Malkin Tower was held is the period when a Sabbat is held.

Different from the fact, Richard Asheton as the heir to the private land of Whalley becomes Alizon's lover in *The Lancashire Witches.* In the settings by Ainsworth, Alizon is not Demdike's granddaughter, but she is found to be the daughter of Alice Nutter who takes her place. In the novel, Nutter is a beautiful witch, breaks off her connection with the Devil to be loyal to Christianity, and is finally burnet at the stake as punishment as another heroin and a Catholic martyr. In the actual trial, after the witches were found guilty and sentenced, they were imprisoned in Lancaster Castle, Demdike died in prison, and the other witches were hung. In *The Lancashire Witches*, Demdike and Chattox die in a beacon in the Sabbat on top of Pendle Hill, when they were followed by Norwell and

Potts before they were puton trial. Ainsworth dramatically turned a real incident into a novel without portraying it in a manner that is faithful to the historical evidence but added the idea of purification by burning witches at the stake as in witch hunts on the European continent.

In *The Lancashire Witches*, Potts is a sly, artful man with a small ugly face, who is whipped by the hostess of an inn, Bess, seriously injured by Alice Nutter's dog, and dragged into the hole by James Device. He is a comical villain, depicted as a witch hunter who claims favour with the King from Ainsworth's Victorian viewpoint. Although the witches Demdike and Chattox are depicted as ugly old women as noted in the record by Potts, a romance is incorporated as a fiction when Richard Ashton tries to help his lover Alizon who is not guilty in this novel. Jennet Device is depicted as a malicious girl who envies Alizon's beauty and circumstances: she is a witch who does not mind driving her family into a corner in order to survive, and casts a spell upon Richard as Alizon's lover to kill him from a disease. Thus, Ainsworth recreates the record of Potts: while Dickens completely establishes his characters in his fiction, Ainsworth creates a novel with characters based on real people with supernatural elements and superstitions. As this novel with supernatural fantasy and romance with witches and magic were very popular and influential in the Victorian period, it may be possible to regard it as the model of the fantasy and historical drama in later generations.

Thomas Carlyle says in *Sartor Resartus* (1833–1834): "Witchcraft, and all manner of Spectre-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness, and Diseases of the Nerves" (Thomas Carlyle, 1987, p. 196). In nineteenth century Europe, witchcrafts and witches are separated from Christianity and Devil and pathologically regarded as madness and collective hysteria: witches are considered to be in trans, completely different from reason. In the age when people reasonably view witches and witchcrafts, they might well have regarded the scene as pure fantasy, where witches fly on their broom in the sky in *The Lancashire Witches*, and intellectuals would never have believed it as in the seventeenth century when the witches had been put on trial in Lancashire. In 1876, a British newspaper, *Police News* played up a case concerning a witch: villagers had tried to kill an old woman regarding her as a witch who murdered a girl, but she was saved by a viewpoint that witches were mere superstition. In the Victorian period, witches had been studied from objective points of view, and Ainsworth as a Victorian intellectual made his characters talk about their views with common sense. In the eighteenth century, while intellectuals regard witches with contempt as superstition with the spread of Enlightenment thought, country villagers still believed inwitches. *The Lancashire Witches* were widely read in four ways: 1) a newspaper serial; 2) a cheap volume; 3) circulation in libraries; 4) purchasing a book with a shilling for a volume edited by the author. Lower class people could read the book in one of these ways, some of them might have actually believed in witches. Ainsworth describes Potts as a tactician who makes use of group psychology of villagers who believe in superstition, and made characters talk about their pity for poor old women and their families as the victims of witch hunts in the seventeenth century. For instance, Nicholas Ashton as Richard's cousin, who seems to reflect Ainsworth's viewpoint, talks to Potts with the word fancy:

> "You will do well, Master Potts", said Nicholas; "still you must not put faith in all the idle tales told you, for the common folk hereabouts are blindly and foolishly superstitious, and fancy they discern witchcraft in every mischance, however slight, that befalls them" (*The Lancashire Witches*, p. 132).

His brother Richard also mentions the prejudices and superstition against witches by country folks:

> "You are confident, sir, because you know there would be every disposition to find her (Alizon) guilty," replied Richard. "She will not be fairly tried. All the prejudices of ignorance and superstition, heightened by the

> published opinions of the King, will be arrayed against her." (*The Lancashire Witches*, pp. 360–361)

On arriving at Malkin Tower in the storm to rescue Alizon captured by Demdike, Richard wondered if it was "disturbed fancy":

> Was it disturbed fancy, or did he really behold on the summit of the structure a grislyshape resembling — if it resembled any thing human — a gigantic black cat, with roughened staring skin, and flaming eyeballs? (*The Lancashire Witches*, p. 393)

This statement reflects Richard's viewpoint of the nineteenth century considering witches, magic and fancy are related to mental disorder. Ainsworth uses witches and phantoms as perfect characters for the gothic atmosphere to suit the taste of Victorian readers. The elements of gothic novels can be seen in the setting where Demdike is the daughter of Blackburn the lord of Malkin Tower in the sixteenth century and the nun who sold her soul to the Devil. Though Ainsworth describes Lancashire witches as supernatural beings with his interest in history and archeology, his description is based on an objective point of view despite the influence of gothic novels.

The Pendle Witches are the origin of fancy and inspiration for writers. Witches are related to fancy and fantasy, which are not meaningless delusions for them but another reality which exists in another dimension. Therefore, magic for witches is the art or transformation of consciousness for a transition to another world, and dramatic elements are significant in the rituals of magic. In the Victorian Age with scientific progress, fancy was gradually emphasized in fields of literature and art. In *The Lancashire Witches*, the term "fancy" appears about ninety times, concerned with the element of masque and disguise:

> (Nicholas) "…Hunting in the morning, a banquet, and, as I have already intimated, a masque at night, in which…I have been solicited to take the drolling part of Jem Tospot — nay, laugh not, Dick, Sherborne says I shall play it in the life — as well as to find some mirthful dame to enact the companion part of Doll Wango. I have spoken with two or three on the subject, and *fancy* one of them will oblige me…." (*The Lancashire Witches*, p. 539).

The seventeenth century as the setting of this novel is the period of William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, whose names are actually stated in it, and a masque is performed in a banquet for King James I when he visits Lancashire. Ainsworth who was well versed in English literature also knew Jonson's plays dealing with witches such as *The Masque of Queens* and *The Devill is an Asse*, and seems to have reflected his knowledge in his work. In Shakespearian plays, fancy is related to disguise, and heroines solve problems with their special powers by disguising themselves as men in *The Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It* and *Two Gentlemen in Verona.* Masques stress disguise, which is related to magic as it tricks the eye by hiding truth and has the power to control reality. A drama is the means to get into another reality: in *The Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, forests exist as other worlds and peripheries withfairies and magic, where characters experience another reality, emphasizing the element of fancy in drama. Pendle Forest is also another world or periphery which is fit for witches. While witch trials in Lancashire continued after the most famous one which Ainsworth described in his novel, the interests of seventeenth-century playwrights in these witches can be seen in their satirical comedies: *The Late Lancashire Witches* by Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome played in the Globe Theatre in 1634; Thomas Shadwell's *The Lancashire-Witches, and Tegue O' Divilly, the Irish Priest* (1681), which is a kind ofa propaganda against Catholicism.

While witches had been regarded as wicked between the fifteenth and seventeenth century, time was soon approaching to accept the fascination of witches with less anti-Christian images as they are at present after the nineteenth century. Jules Michelet in *La Sorcière* (1862) states that many witches were young and beautiful. Nance

Redferne, set as the granddaughter of Chattox by Ainsworth in *The Lancashire Witches*, appears as a young beautiful witch in disguise for a masque in front of King James I. George Cruickshank depicted Nance Redferne and Alizon Device as beautiful maids for the three volumes of his novel in the 1830s and 1840s, where Alizon is a heroine who is regarded as a witch and prays to God for fighting with the Devil after trying to take the life of her mother Alice Nutter and dies after the death of her lover Richard before the trial.

In the Victorian period, when the belief in witches almost disappeared, the interest in them were revealed in cultural and artistic phenomena. The gothic novel published by Johann Wilhelm Meinhold in 1847 was translated into English by Jane Francisca Wilde, the mother of Oscar Wilde, as *Sidonia* two years later. Sidonia really did exist as a Pomeranian noble who was on trial as a witch in 1620 and sentenced to death at the age of eighty. This book on Sidonia particularily influenced the Pre-Raphaelites to depict witches and femme fatales.

In 1860, Edward Burne-Jones drew the painting titled *Sidonia von Bork.* In *Merlin and Nimuë* (1861), he depicted the scene where Nimuë as the lady of the lake is trying to confine Merlin under a tombstone. Later Burne-Jones developed the same theme in *The Beguiling of Merlin* (1873–1874), which became the focus of interest at Grovesnor Gallery in 1877. This painting shows Merlin who is betrayed and deprived of magical power by Nimuë with a snake around her head, practicing magic. Burne-Jones also depicted another witch Circe in*The Wine of Circe* (1863–1869): Circe can transform people to animals with magical medicine; when Odyssey visits her island on his way from Troy, she becomes his lover for her medicine was not effective against him after she transformed his subordinates into pigs. As for the works concerning the tales on witches, Burne-Jones produced *Cinderella* in 1863, which was shown in the exhibition for the Society of Old Water Colour the following year. He also worked on the series of *Briar Rose* in 1860s.

## 5. Conclusion

Although the belief in witches had faded and witch hunts had actually died out in the Victorian Age, witches and sorceries revived as fantasy and femme fatal in literature and art. Thus, while witches were denied by reason, they were depicted as fantastic and fascinating women in art and literature. This seems to be the basis of witches and sorceries in fantasy in novels in the twentieth century.

*The Lancashire Witches* displays a lot of Lancashire dialect spoken by folks and the landscape and architecture on Pendle Hill with antiquarian knowledge, which reveals the fashion of antiquarianism and the influence of Chetham Society related to Ainsworth. Antiquarianism was influenced by the picturesque and criticized with the development of history. The works of Ainsworth were also criticized by the critics who respected thehistorical viewpoint. However, his novels including his seven Lancashire novels reveal the nostalgia for the past with his love of Lancashire, trying to save the culture and tradition of Lancashire with Chetham Society and to restore the festivals held before the Reformation. Ainsworth's style including fancy or fantasy into history to recreate it should not be underestimated as it became the model for modern fantasy and historical fiction.

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