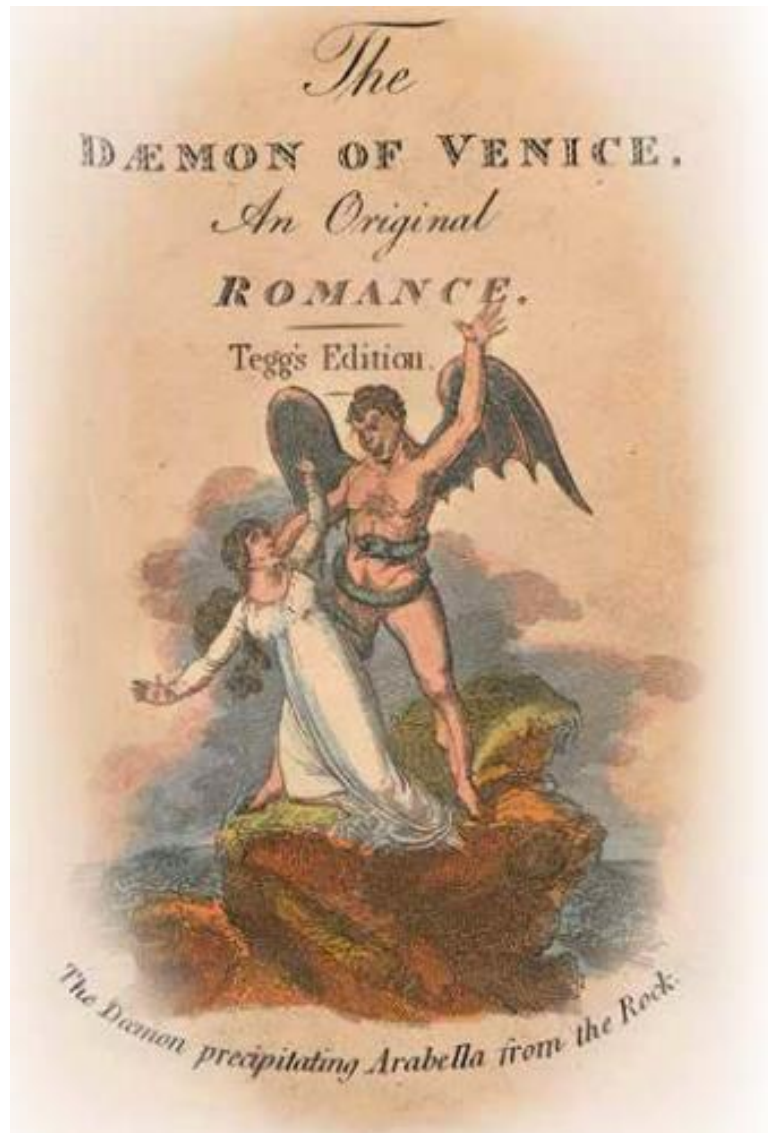


## Satan's romance with Romance:

An analysis of satanic relationships and the projection of satanic wandering in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* (1806) and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796)



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## Abstract

Satan as a literary character is one of the most recurring characters throughout literature. The aim of this thesis is to explore a small fragment of the stories Satan has been a part of, and investigate the satanic impact on the characters that encounters and befriends the devil, in two literary works from the Romantic period. This pursuit will be conducted through an investigation of Satanic relations between the protagonists and Satan as represented in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or The Moor* and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*.

The Romantic period is significant in the history of Satan as a literary character, as a group of British artists and writers started to, think and create works about Satan, in a different manner than the writers that came before them. The fictional character Satan was no longer regarded as an arrogant driven by lust without means, but a sort of disturbed hero, that readers could sympathise with. As this thesis will argue, in Dacre's – and Lewis's works where we encounter Satan, romance is significant in the making of a Satanic character that is possible to be sympathetic towards, in these literary works Satan gains his sympathy by being portrayed as a victim of unrequited love. Dacre's and Lewis's works are particularly interesting in this instance since one is traditionally understood as being influenced by the other, even though the progression of the narrative and the end for the narrators have similarities, there are differences in their approach to the character of Satan when we consider the differences in the two ambiguous characters. Both authors are commonly regarded as conservatives of their time; as I will argue, and their approach in creation of these two at the time radical literary, and their commentary to gender, race and indulgence is ambiguous.

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## Chapter 1, Introduction

The devil has inspired the creativity of human beings more than any other character.<sup>1</sup>

The Devil, Satan, Lucifer, Beelzebub, Antichrist, the fallen angel; the concept of the character goes by many names, not to mention multiple incarnations in literature. In two literary works from the Romantic period, Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* (1806) and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), I aim to investigate the concept of Satan through the relationships that the character initiates with the protagonists of the novels, as well as the concept of satanic wandering projected and expressed in the two protagonists, Victoria and Ambrosio, the protagonists who engage in a satanic relationship.

In Old English narrative poetry and literature, Satan is mainly presented as the fallen archangel and a tempter, with a clear biblical connection.<sup>2</sup> In the transition between Old English and the Early Modern period, in correlation with the Reformation, Satan ascends from hell and there is a profound change in the concept of his character within arts and literature: he takes on a more human form and roams the earth. During the Romantic period a group of British artists begin to write, think and create works about Satan in a different manner from the writers that came before them.<sup>3</sup> Van Luijk states in his book *Children of Lucifer*, a comprehensive study about the origins of modern religious Satanism, that this group of creatives and readers from the Romantic period generally would have read Milton's poem *Paradise Lost* in a different manner than readers and creatives from the preceding era. The fictional character Satan was no longer regarded as an arrogant driven by lust without means, but rather a disturbed hero that readers could sympathise with. Several of this groups comments regarding Milton's poem mention the Miltonic Satan, fitting the interpretation of Satan as some sort of heroic character. In this redefinition of a literary Satan, we encounter

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<sup>1</sup> Baillie, E., *Facing the Fiend: Satan as a Literary Character*, Cambridge, The Lutterworth Press, 2014, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Dendle, P., *Satan Unbound: The Devil in Old English Narrative Literature*, Toronto University of Toronto Press, 2001, p.10.

<sup>3</sup> Van Luijk, R., *Children of Lucifer*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016, p.69.

the character in a more sympathetic manner than previous interpretation of the satanic character.<sup>4</sup> During this literary period, Marlowe's work also received renewed attention, as rising to be considered a 'poetic rebellion'.<sup>5</sup> Literary works of the Romantic period, such as the *Monk and Zofloya*, featuring Satan, was influenced by the diabolic tropes of the gothic genre. These works tended to have a tempting devil, which can be considered within the Faustian tradition of Satanic characterisation.<sup>6</sup> To conclude the changes in the approach to Satan as a literary character, British Romanticism established a landscape where it was possible to be sympathetic with the Devil.<sup>7</sup> This thesis will aim to explore whether the characteristics of Satan in the two Romantic works are equivalent with the perception of Satan as a seducer<sup>8</sup>.

With the chosen focus on romance, this thesis encounters the concept of romance by addressing the Romantic period, the literary genre romance, and romance as the subject of love and desire. Both Lewis' and Dacre's works are written in the Romantic period, and the protagonists of the novels encounter romance in different aspects, this will be examined further in chapter two.

Even though The Romantic period is the shortest, according to The Norton Anthology of English Literature the period is equally complex and diverse as other literary periods in British history. The Romantic period functions as a reaction to political revolutions taking place in the United States of America and France, as well as to the political uncertainty on the European continent and Britain at the time. With this the Romantic literary period is one where conservative literature coexists and comments on the more progressive and liberal form of arts appearing in this literary era, bringing back elements from medieval romances, with

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<sup>4</sup> Van Luijk, pp.70-71.

<sup>5</sup> Bartels, S., *The Devil and the Victorians: Supernatural Evil in Nineteenth-Century English Culture*, New York, Routledge, 2021, p.196.

<sup>6</sup>Bartels, pp.194-196.

<sup>7</sup> Bartels, p.196.

<sup>8</sup> Craciun, A., *Romatic Satanism and the Rise of Nineteenth-Century Women's Poetry*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, vol. 34, no. 4, 2003, p. 700

“wild verse-tales of adventure, chivalry and love.”<sup>9</sup>.<sup>10</sup> It is a literary period that distinguishes itself from all previous forms of literature, and reflects the uncertainties of the political climate in Britain at the time. According to Kiely the British literature preceding the Romantic period was dominated by the use of historical elements and being inspired by journalistic methods at the time, writing about ordinary events, and portray a more realistic mundane life among different social classes. In the Romantic period the artistic scene is shaped by a desire to expand and break the old conventions both with serious attempts to do so, and more laidback and humorous approaches to the new way of storytelling, with elements that are wild, grotesque and inappropriate. With the main motivation to make stories for entertaining the popular taste for the spectacular.<sup>11</sup> The glossary list of *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* states in the glossary that the Romantic period and the literature, art, and music original to the period was partly a revolt against neoclassicism, a rebellion against the social and political norms of the aristocracy, and a reaction to the movement of rationalizing the science of nature.<sup>12</sup>

Mary Wollstonecraft, targets this debate in her feminist philosophical book *A Vindication of The Rights of Women* (1792). In this piece, she advocates for humans, specifically women, to be perfected in their nature as rational and moral beings, and that the patriarchal structures of society limit the nature of women to unfold as intended by the creation of human beings, leading women who do not fit within the submissive patriarchal structure to be deprived of finding their purpose as women in society.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Lynch, D., *Introduction*, The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 10th ed. Eds. Lynch et al. Vol D, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2018, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Lynch, pp. 3-4.

<sup>11</sup> Kiely, R., *The Romantic Novel in England*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972, p. vii.

<sup>12</sup> Guerin, Wilfred L., *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., New York, Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 426.

<sup>13</sup> Wollstonecraft, M, *A Vindication of The Rights of Women*, (1792), Rev. Ed. London, Penguin Books, 2004, p. 29.



Romance, the literary genre, is defined in the glossary list of *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* as having longer narratives of fictional prose from the nineteenth century romance, and is defined by two quite different approaches. The traditional understanding of a romance is where we encounter unusual people on some sort of quest aided by fantastic creatures. The added understanding from the nineteenth century also includes romantic novels, meaning novels that contain some sort of romantic relationship, dealing with the circumstances of this or these encounters of love or desire.<sup>14</sup> Both Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* and Lewis' *The Monk* deal with the genre on both definitions of romance. There is Dacre's unnatural woman Victoria, on a quest to find love and her place as a woman in society, aided by the fantastic creature Satan. Similarly, the monk Ambrosio in Lewis' novel is on a quest to find himself, aided by the fantastic creature of the satanic Matilda. Both novels contain somewhat of a relationship with a dynamic of love.

The third definition of romance we will encounter in this thesis is the general common understanding of the term 'romance', in both verb and noun form, referring to several definitions, amongst which are the feeling of love, the desire for love or the engagement in a love affair. Both of the authors' protagonists deal with various forms of relationships, and in this thesis, I aim to answer how the relationship between Satan and the protagonists is expressed as well as how this relationship impacts the protagonists, Victoria and Ambrosio. I will further discuss this in the literary analysis in chapter 2. The thesis will deal with the genre of romance and the linguistic definition of romance in the same instances, as the two terms to somewhat overlap each other in the sections being analysed. In instances where this does not occur the noun or verb form will be used, e.g. introduction love and desire.

This thesis will also encounter the literary concept of wandering. This concept is something that is performed by a character in a narrative, and there are different hybrids of the act of wandering. The general definition of the concept of wandering according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is to move without aim and meaning, without a fixed course, direction, or control. It is defined as being in some sort of motion, either of physical character, or including the psyche. During the Romantic period, the split dualism with regard to mind and body were still a very realistic worldview, in regard to wandering. This meant that minds

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<sup>14</sup> Guerin, p. 426.

would possess the ability to wander of their own volition. The person with the wandering mind, did not necessarily control the mind-wandering.<sup>15</sup>

The wanderer also known as the seeker or explorer, is an archetypal character that goes on a journey, either physically or mentally, from his known home to the unknown, to find a greater meaning to life. This Wanderer can also be a traveller that doesn't belong to a settled group or tribe, an outcast, or someone on the run.<sup>16</sup>

According to Baillie, when Satan was cast out of heaven for his rebellion towards God, Satan was left in a void in the human world where he was doomed to wander the earth. From this, the concept of Satan as a restless wanderer arose. The concept of satanic wandering is akin to that of the 'Wandering Jew' and 'Female wandering'<sup>17</sup>, the latter of which is a niche in the concept of wandering. These three similar concepts of wandering are all distinguished by some sort of exile and unfreedom; a type of forced wandering, unlike the traveller who travels out of curiosity and with a desire to explore. The concept of Satan as a wanderer implies that the character is in motion, but as Satan is not a human being, he does not belong in the world he roams. Satan is an extraordinary character, and the wandering expresses unsettlement and homelessness, with a general characterization of restlessness.<sup>18</sup> Baillie claims that the Romantic period was especially occupied with the notion of wandering, this being the reason for the concept of Satan as a wanderer becoming so strongly represented in literature from this period.<sup>19</sup> This interest in wandering is something that can be seen in Wollstonecraft's philosophy as well. With the concept of wandering, this thesis aims to explore if Satan, and satanic wandering, is significant in the outcome of the paths of Dacre's and Lewis' protagonists.

Even though the concept of wandering and Satan entertains the Romantic period, the

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<sup>15</sup> Morris, David Brown, *Wanderers: Literature, Culture and the Open Road*, 1st ed. London, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021, p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> Santi, A., *The Wanderer and the English Romantics*, English Literature 2, Buenos Aires, Universidad Nacional de San Martin, n.d., p.5.

<sup>17</sup> Horrocks, Ingrid, *Woman Wanderers and the writing of mobility 1784-1814*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Baillie, p. 81.

<sup>19</sup> Baillie, p. 81.

Satan of Lewis and Dacre does not engage with Satan as a character who wanders. We do however encounter the characteristics of satanic wandering in the authors' protagonists, both in Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* and in Lewis' *The Monk*. Ambrosio's and Victoria's relationships to the concept of wandering is significantly different after they encounter Satan, as opposed to the wandering the characters engage in before their relationship with Satan. With this, the satanic wandering is projected to the protagonists who deal with satanic romance. The wandering of these two protagonists is linked to the romantic relationships they encounter with the satanic character, and with this I aim to explore how satanic wandering is expressed in Lewis' and Dacre's protagonists.

In Dacre's and Lewis' books, the satanic wandering of the protagonists is expressed in various manners. Amongst these there are traces of both 'female wandering' and mind-wandering. I will explore this further in chapter three.

## **1.1 Introducing Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* and Matthew Lewis *The Monk*.**

Matthew Lewis and Charlotte Dacre are the authors of the novels that this thesis engages with. Both Lewis and Dacre wrote during the Romantic period, with Lewis being one of the earlier Romantic writers, and Dacre one of the later in the period. While their two works, *The Monk* and *Zofloya, or the Moor* are commonly linked to each other, this is largely due to the knowledge of Dacre's admiration of Lewis' *The Monk*. Her first novel *The Confessions of the Nun of St. Omer* (1805) was dedicated to Matthew Lewis, and written under the pseudonym 'Rosa Matilda', a not so subtle declaration of her admiration for Lewis' book.<sup>20</sup> The narrative of these two novels, *The Monk* and *Zofloya, or the Moor* are also frequently linked to each other, to the point where Dacre's novel has been described by critics who are analysing the two novels as "Reversing the gender but retaining the logic of Lewis's scheme, Dacre grants the same control over the corpse to her most conspicuous invention, the

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<sup>20</sup> Craciun, A., *Unnatural, Unsexed, Undead: Charlotte Dacre's Gothic Bodies,* "Fatal Women of Romanticism, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002 pp.112, 114.

Moor Zofloya.”<sup>21</sup>. Dacre and Lewis’ moral warning in their respective novels is that, considering the plot of their narrative, it goes against the more liberal thoughts and publications of the “contemporary feminists such as Wollstonecraft”<sup>22</sup>, suggesting that they both could be considered politically conservative in the discussion of gender roles, even though their narratives in *The Monk* and *Zofloya, or the Moor* might suggest a more liberal approach to both gender and race. Dacre’s novel is “Engaged in overt dialogue”<sup>23</sup> with Lewis’ *The Monk*, and the narrative of the two novels are strikingly similar. A protagonist engages with some satanic power, leaving a trail of dead people behind them, which ultimately leads to the destruction of the protagonist. Besides the similarities between the two novels, the authors approach and use of Satan as a character differ. Dacre’s narrative engages with Satan disguised as the character Zofloya, whilst Lewis’ narrative deals with satanic powers through the character of Matilda, a demon allegedly believed to be Satan’s helper.

### 1.1.1 Charlotte Dacre’s *Zofloya, or the Moor*

In Charlotte Dacre’s *Zofloya, or the Moor* we encounter the protagonist Victoria, and follow her journey from when she was a child to her death by Satan’s hand. Victoria’s mother becomes the very woman that Wollstonecraft’s critique discusses, where she embodies the patriarchal norms ultimately leading her to become an “alluring mistress”<sup>24</sup> rather than what she expresses as “affectionate wives and rational mothers”<sup>25</sup>. Victoria’s mother by her transgresses the societal norms of female virtue, and becomes “[...] that women who have fostered a romantic unnatural delicacy of feeling, waste their lives in *imagining* how happy

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<sup>21</sup> Shapira, Y, “*Shamelessly Gothic: Enjoying the Corpse in The Monk and Zofloya.*” *Inventing the Gothic Corpse*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 180.

<sup>22</sup> Craciun, p. 113.

<sup>23</sup> Shapira, p. 177.

<sup>24</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 2.

they should have been with a husband who could love them with a fervid increasing affection every day, and all day.”<sup>26</sup>

By the missing example of a present mother, Victoria becomes what Craciun would describe as “unfemale”<sup>27</sup>; she does not submit to the patriarchal norms of the time she lives in, as she at some point takes control over her own narrative. Victoria marries the count Berenza, a rather unhappy marriage for Victoria, and when she first meets his brother Henriquez, she is struck by love. Satan, disguised as the servant Zofloya, a Moor, enters the narrative midway through the novel. The fact that Zofloya is first introduced half way through the narrative is interesting, considering the importance of his part, but it also allows the protagonist Victoria to develop on her own as a flawed character, leaving her prone to satanic seduction. On the subject of race, Dacre portrays a development of a radical relationship between Victoria and Zofloya, considering that Satan is a black servant and Victoria is of a higher social class. In Dacre’s story, the portrayal of wandering is executed in various forms by various characters. Victoria’s brother starts his journey early in the novel with the murder of their father. Victoria also wanders, both physically and mentally. Her first wander could be considered as the niche theory of *female wandering*, when she escapes from her imprisonment from her mother and her mother’s lover Ardolph. After this first physical wandering, Victoria only nurtures her mental wandering. When she’s introduced to Zofloya, however, under the satanic influence her physical wandering reappears. Zofloya does not engage in satanic wandering himself, but we do see his influence in the moments and mobility of Victoria after they encounter each other. Whilst the narrative of Victoria’s engagement with Satan unfolds, so does Dacre’s portrayal of the ultimate female failure, according to patriarchal Romantic periods standard. Craciun argues that regarding the deconstruction of women’s subjectivity - the most important contribution to the critique of the proper woman of her time is not in “creating a new vision of female subjectivity like Wollstonecraft, but in destroying the possibility of a stable subject identity”<sup>28</sup> as a critique to the societal expectations of female subjectivity, the following discussion in chapter two will build on this statement.

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<sup>26</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 29.

<sup>27</sup> Craciun, p. 131.

<sup>28</sup> Craciun, p. 111.

### 1.1.2 Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*

In Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* a tandem narratives story, the narratives meet at the end. However, this thesis will only engage with one of the narratives, the one of Ambrosio, the monk. Ambrosio is a devoted, celebrated monk in Madrid, living a seemingly happy monastic life oblivious to the unmoral matter of the world outside the monastery. Ambrosio shares a seemingly homosocial relationship with the monk Rosario, who turns out to be a woman, Matilda. Matilda, even though she claims she is an ordinary human, has relations to Satan. In this thesis, Matilda will be regarded as Satan's deputy in the relationship with Ambrosio. Matilda is introduced to the narrative as the satanic seducer, in her journey as a protagonist of Lewis's novel her role is displayed in her continuous attempts in seducing Ambrosio, to give into his desires. In the narrative of Ambrosio, we follow his journey from a dutiful monk to a dutiful slave of suppressed desire. With this, Lewis comments in his novel on "the danger of remaining ignorant of vice and sexuality [...]"<sup>29</sup>, and how this ultimately leads to a contract with Satan and being doomed in hell. Ambrosio's journey as a protagonist through his narrative is portrayed by Lewis "between radical and reactionary"<sup>30</sup>, radical in the killing spree Ambrosio pursues with the influence of the satanic Matilda, and reactionary in the justification of his actions as being a sexually suppressed man. Lewis comments on the subject of gender, with the interplay between Ambrosio and Matilda, and how these two characters' function in relation to each other. Matilda cross-dresses as a monk, and in her relationship with Ambrosio, she at instances portrays traditional masculine behaviour. While Ambrosio at times takes on a more 'feminine' role, "[...] class and gender stratification are absolute, held in place by a powerful system [...]"<sup>31</sup> in the Romantic period, meaning that Lewis' comment describes gender roles in a liberal manner. This subject will be further investigated in chapter 2. In Lewis' story the portrayal of wandering is only performed by

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<sup>29</sup> Jones, Wendy, "*Stories of Desire in the Monk*", ELH, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, vol. 57, no. 1, 1990, p.146.

<sup>30</sup> Shapira, p. 181.

<sup>31</sup> Watkins, Daniel P., "*Social Hierarchy in Matthew Lewis's 'The Monk'*" *Studies in the Novel*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, vol.18, no. 2, 1986, p. 123.

Ambrosio, in the narrative of the monk. The concept of wandering first occurs after Ambrosio's engagement with the satanic Matilda, and the beginning of his wander down the path of desire. The following discussion in chapter 3 will elaborate on satanic-influenced wandering in *The Monk*.

## Chapter 2: Romance

you are but too interesting, too amiable! I should love you

Lewis, p. 63.

This chapter will discuss the development and significance of satanic relationships with the protagonists Victoria and Ambrosio in Dacre's novel *Zofloya, or the Moor* and in Lewis' novel *The Monk*, outlining the character traits of Satan as a literary character in these two works in context of the romantic relationship the authors portray. Specifically, I argue that both Lewis and Dacre contradict their association with being conservative members of society, as their approach to Satan's portrayal is liberal. The character Lewis and Dacre provide has more ambiguous characteristics than the traditional understanding of Satan, as a tempter driven by lust without means. The characteristics given by the authors of Satan as a literary character is expressed in the challenge of the established norm of race and gender during the Romantic period. Satan is portrayed differently in Dacre's and Lewis' literary works. In Dacre's novel, Satan is present in the character Zofloya, masked as a perfect suitor for the protagonist Victoria. While in Lewis' novel, Satan is not significantly present in the narrative, although he is summoned twice. In the final conversation between the narrator Ambrosio and Satan, Satan claims that Matilda has been a satanic agent, so for the sake of this thesis Matilda is to be considered as the satanic element in Lewis' narrative. Dacre and Lewis both engage with romance in their exploration of satanic seduction, Satan in both novels functions as the pursuer of the protagonists of the story.

### 2.1 Zofloya – Charlotte Dacre

When Charlotte Dacre's novel *Zofloya, or The Moor* was first published it was received with varied critics. The novel's graphic and controversial themes of female sexuality, betrayal and murder caused a stir among readers. It was praised for its dark and gothic atmosphere, whilst being criticized for its immoral content and lack of moral redemption for the heroine. More recent academic studies of the novel are as contradictory as when the novel was first published. Some of the critique is commenting on Dacre's approach to the societal



expectations of females and the female characters as well as the execution of the apparent moral of the story while it is praised by some for the way it captures the discussion on gender and how it uses absurd approaches to be a “spectacle”<sup>32</sup>.

In Diane Hoeveler’s critique *Charlotte Dacre’s Zofloya: A Case Study in Miscegenation as Sexual and Racial Nausea* she argues that even though the novel contributed to introduce Mary Wollstonecraft’s ideas on female subjectivity to a larger audience, it is done so in a perverted manner.

[...] one that epitomized a culture’s intense dread of maternal and feminine sexuality as so viciously evil and unnatural that as a force it rivals the blackness of Satan’s dark deeds.<sup>33</sup>

The narrator Victoria is Dacre’s morbid example of this epitomisation, and she advises her readers to follow the sexually conservative perceptions of society in order to avoid the danger of recklessness.<sup>34</sup> Hoeveler argues that *Zofloya, or The Moor* epitomizes a culture’s intense dread of maternal and feminine sexuality as so viciously evil and unnatural that as a force, it is equal with Satan’s dark deeds.

In contradiction to Hoeveler’s argument, I argue that the perception of Satan in Dacre’s novel is ambiguous, and can not only be interpreted as a character whose agency is restricted to “dark deeds”<sup>35</sup>. In the relationship between the Moor and Victoria, Dacre uses language and descriptions to suggest that the relationship between the two characters is deeper than what meets the eye. This is especially present in the garden scene, midway through the novel. The relationship between the two characters, Zofloya and Victoria, is not just a simple dynamic involving seduction or romance, but is instead complex and multi-

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<sup>32</sup> Shapira, p. 179.

<sup>33</sup> Hoeveler, D, *Charlotte Dacre’s Zofloya: A Case Study in Miscegenation as Sexual and Racial Nausea*, *European Romantic Review*, vol. 8, no. 2, p. 186.

<sup>34</sup> Craciun, A, *Unnatural, Unsexed, Undead: Charlotte Dacre’s Gothic Bodies,* *Fatal Women of Romanticism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 111.

<sup>35</sup> Hoeveler, p. 186.

layered. Through the lines “Victoria felt too surprised, almost gratified to repulse him”<sup>36</sup>, “apparent consternation opened his vest [...] cast himself upon his knees”<sup>37</sup> and “[...] seeming suddenly to recollect himself, he appeared struck with confusion”<sup>38</sup>, it seems that Dacre conveys the emotional turmoil and intense feelings that the character’s experiences in this particular moment. Victoria is exceptionally drawn to Zofloya, yet at the same time is surprised by his actions, while Zofloya seems to be struggling with conflicting impulses. On the other hand, the feelings that the characters’ experience is too exaggerated, almost as if the characters themselves are surprised by their own actions. Victoria is “*too* surprised”<sup>39</sup> and “*almost* gratified”<sup>40</sup>, responding to the actions taking place. All the while, Zofloya is experiencing “apparent consternation”<sup>41</sup> and “appeared struck with confusion”<sup>42</sup> by his own actions. It is as if the two characters in this scene are playing an act from a romantic play, that neither of them is really a part of, which adds to the complexity of the relationship between the two characters. In this scene Dacre is drawing from the romantic plot of the medieval period, where the romantic display tended to be exaggerated. Wollstonecraft argues that the patriarchal dogmas of the time, where women are supposed to align with specific societal structures of what it means to be a ‘civilized’ woman, is confusing for the participants, and

Their senses are inflamed, and their understandings neglected, consequently they become the prey of their sense, delicately termed sensibility, and are blown about by every momentary gust of feeling.<sup>43</sup>

Dacre portrays this with the Medieval scene which she presents to her readers, where both Victoria and Zofloya are acting out their part, and being equally confused about the part they are playing, making their gendered roles expressed as ambiguous.

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<sup>36</sup> Dacre, Charlotte, *Zofloya, or the Moor*, (1806), Ed. Kim Ian Michasiw, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008. p.101.

<sup>37</sup> Dacre. p.147.

<sup>38</sup> Dacre. p.147.

<sup>39</sup> Dacre, p.147.

<sup>40</sup> Dacre, p.147.

<sup>41</sup> Dacre. p.147.

<sup>42</sup> Dacre, p.147.

<sup>43</sup> Wollstonecraft, pp. 66-67.

During one of the suppers, Victoria experiences the Moor observing her.

Whenever she cast her eyes upon the Moor, she could perceive that he observed her; and not observed her only, but with a tender, serious interest, that filled her soul with a troubled sort of delight<sup>44</sup>.

At this point in the novel it is not transparent where this ‘interest’ is coming from, or the reason for the ‘interest’. Victoria experiences that the interest she receives from Zofloya’s gazing is one of romantic interest in her. This could also just as easily be something that Victoria is imagining, as the two characters at this point in the novel have not talked with each other or had a physical encounter apart from being in the same room at dinner service. In other words, it is possible that Victoria’s perspective is being focalised in the third person narration. This is significant in the narrative of Victoria, as it separates her reality from her imagined reality. Apart from the gaze that Victoria experiences, there is no indication of a romantic understanding between the two characters at this point in the narrative. What is interesting in this passage is Victoria’s experience of the gaze, as she is describing the Moor’s observation of her as an experience of “a troubled sort of delight”<sup>45</sup>. This troubled feeling that Victoria is experiencing could be that she feels a physical attraction towards the Moor, as he is described as an ideal romantic suitor, both physically and decorum. The troubled feeling, she is experiencing in this case would be problematic in terms of late nineteenth century standards, as Victoria is a married woman. A romantic relationship between the two characters would be problematic not solely due to her being married, but it would also be a breach of the social standard, as Zofloya is of different social class and race than Victoria, as a servant from Victoria whom is born into a higher class. The troubled feeling could also be grounded in her recognition of Zofloya as a dangerous character. While she is drawn to the Moor’s attention and interest, she also experiences the observation as unsettling. The Moor’s gaze is intense and at the same time meaningful to her; it makes her feel special, however Victoria could potentially recognise the underlying danger in the Moor’s gaze. The term “troubled sort of delight” suggests that while she feels pleasure and excitement from the attention, she is also aware of the negative consequences that may come with it, either from

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<sup>44</sup> Dacre, p. 145.

<sup>45</sup> Dacre, p. 145.

the true nature of the Moor, or because she is a married woman. This complicates the critical idea that the heroine of Dacre's novel is solely a disturbed example of the bourgeois norm of female behaviour, primarily led by her sexuality,

The woman who has only been taught to please will soon find that her charms are oblique sunbeams, and that they cannot have much effect on her husband's heart when they are seen every day, when the summer is passed and gone. Will she then have sufficient native energy to look into herself for comfort, and cultivate her dormant faculties? Or is it not more rational to expect that she will try to please other men [...]<sup>46</sup>,

Victoria is not lead by her sexuality, as she could be described as one of Wollstonecraft's women who are solely taught to please, and even though she does not receive love from her husband Berenza, a love that she never required in the first place.

In her academic work *Fatal Women of Romanticism*, Adriana Craciun discuss the function of bodies, especially the female body in Dacre's works, and elevates the societal discussion of the time of what a female body was and was supposed to be. She argues that "Dacre's strong Sadean affinities and pornographic subject and style challenge the notion of a "woman's" tradition and of gender-complementary readings of Romanticism"<sup>47</sup>, issues that is present in Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor*. Craciun argues that regarding the deconstruction of women's subjectivity, the most important contribution to the critique of the proper woman of her time, is not in "creating a new vision of female subjectivity like Wollstonecraft, but in destroying the possibility of a stable subject identity"<sup>48</sup> as a critique to the societal expectations of female subjectivity. "The femme fatale characters in Dacre's best-known novel, *Zofloya; or The Moor*, [...], are unique in women's writing of the Romantic period,

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<sup>46</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 22.

<sup>47</sup> Craciun, p. 153.

<sup>48</sup> Craciun, p. 111.

and yet have much in common with the heroines of [...] Lewis.”<sup>49</sup> In *Zofloya*, Dacre challenges the expectations of female subjectivity in her representation of the female narrator Victoria, but she also portrays these societal expectations in the character of Lilla, acting as a gothic double and counterpart to the rebellious and what Craciun would consider as “unnatural”. Craciun argues that Dacre presents female characters “who systematically perform actions “unnatural” for women (such as dominate, assert, desire, aggress and kill), thereby destabilizing the categories “feminine” and “female””<sup>50</sup>, the character of Victoria transgresses to become one of these typical Dacrean females, not necessarily out of her own influence, but along with the satanic character Zofloya she becomes a female character who does “not seek to recreate the world, but to destroy it”<sup>51</sup>. At the time bourgeoisie England was in a discussion on what sex was, and particularly what the female sex was, and was supposed to be. With this, the nature of Dacre’s female characters, even though presented as female, was in contradiction to the societal norm of what femininity was. Craciun argues that the degradation of Dacre’s female characters “points to the limits of the two-sex model”<sup>52</sup>. The limitations to the two-sex model at the time, as have happened to societal expectations of the female, before and after, is that there are females who do not fit into the category of what a woman is. According to Craciun, many of Dacre’s female characters fall within this category and becomes “unsexed” by society, being perceived as a notfemale. This concept according to Craciun, does not mean that a woman becomes a man by the reversion of the gender polarity, to be unsexed is the same as being notfemale, a monstrous “hyena in petticoats”.<sup>53</sup> Dacre with the character Victoria explores the “dangers of excessive sexual passion in titillating detail”<sup>54</sup>. Craciun argues that what Dacre does with the protagonist Victoria is to take the association of otherness deriving from the “unnatural” females, even further, she “rewrites *The Monk* into a woman’s “outsider narrative”<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Craciun, p. 153.

<sup>50</sup> Craciun, p.153.

<sup>51</sup> Craciun, p.153.

<sup>52</sup> Craciun, p.120.

<sup>53</sup> Craciun, p. 120.

<sup>54</sup> Craciun, p. 130.

<sup>55</sup> Craciun, p.114.

The Moor and Victoria's first physical meeting is set after the dinner where she experienced the troublesome gaze. In the scene, the protagonist Victoria has retired to the garden, as Dacre includes medieval elements in her novel. She suddenly hears a sound, and the Moor, Zofloya, is present in the garden with her, at a "respectable distance"<sup>56</sup>, the respectable distance Zofloya holds could be explained by various instances, it could be due to the hierarchal difference between the two protagonists, or it could be explained in the terms of romance, as well as the Romantic periods decorum, Victoria is a married woman. The Moor being present in the garden, approaching Victoria, is peculiar considering the relationship between the two, or rather the lack of a relationship between them. Zofloya approaches Victoria while she is alone in the garden, which according to the societal standard of the time would put her in an especially helpless position. In his hands Zofloya carries a bouquet of roses, that he intends to scatter before her. From medieval courtship, the rose is commonly known in literature to be a symbol of love, romance, virginity and purity. Even though the colour of the roses is not indicated, there is a sense of the action taking place being of romantic character. The romantic aspect of the action could be read as a seductive move from Zofloya, trying to lure his victim in. It could also be read as a pure romantic gesture, the duality of the situation and approach towards the protagonist adds complexity to the relationship between the two characters. Where there is both a seduction plot and a romance plot, happening at the same time, Dacre establishes sympathy for the character of Zofloya as some sort of hopeless romantic, pursuing a woman he could never have, as she is already married to Berenza and hopelessly in love with Henriquez.

Victoria is playing along with the romantic gesture offered, and instead of the flowers simply being scattered before her, she also wants some for her bosom. Victoria's request displays that at this point in Dacre's novel, she is in charge of her own agency, she states her wish that effects the events of the scene.

He took the choicest rose from the bouquet, and strewed the remainder at the feet of Victoria: then, extending his hand, he presented to her the rose which he had selected. [...] as she did so, a thorn ran deep into one of her fingers [...].<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Dacre, p. 146.

<sup>57</sup> Dacre, p.147.

In some instances, the rose thorn is considered a phallic symbol, adding to the bodily imageries of the scene. The Miltonic Satan especially is associated with sexual connotations and sexual liberty, as this is being commented on by Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and the implied jealousy Satan experiences to Adam and Eve's intercourse.<sup>58</sup> In this instance, it could be that the most important part of the pricking of the rose thorn is the blood that has been shed, which the Moor is able to collect with a linen cloth. In a literary context, in a traditional manner, the creation of a satanic contract between Satan and his 'victim' or 'customer', the contract is traditionally believed to be signed in blood as we shall later see in Lewis's *The Monk*. If the scene is analysed with this in mind, a contract between the protagonist and Satan has been established, without Victoria being aware. Similar to the Faustian devil, Zofloya could be interpreted with cunning characteristics. Since it has not been established at this point that Zofloya is actually Satan, the whole scene is read as a romantic gesture towards Victoria, and that Zofloya is romantically interested in the protagonist, as the language used by Dacre is bodily, adding to the sexual interpretation between the characters, "Zofloya pressed the crimsoned linen to his heart, [...] he folded it up as a sacred relic, and placed it in his bosom"<sup>59</sup>, the bloodstained cloth is saved by Zofloya as a keepsake, adding to the ambivalence of the relationship between the characters.

In the chapter, *Shamelessly Gothic: Enjoying the Corpse in The Monk and Zofloya*, from her academic work *Inventing the Gothic Corpse: The Thrill of Human Remains in the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Yael Shapira explores the use and meaning of dead bodies in Lewis's *The Monk* and in Dacre's *Zofloya*. Shapira argues that in contradiction to other critics her argument is that "the rationale behind Victoria's alternation can be found in the *Monk*: Victoria, like Ambrosio, begins to lose sovereignty over herself the moment she falls under the influence of a demonic agent with the power to conjure up exactly what she wants to see."<sup>60</sup>, while it previously has been a common thought that the change in the protagonist's characterisation is due to her awakening sexual desire.

While the change in the protagonist's sovereignty first happens when Victoria is under

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<sup>58</sup> Empson, William, *The Satan on Milton*, *The Hudson Review*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1960, pp. 44, 52.

<sup>59</sup> Dacre, p.147.

<sup>60</sup> Shapira, p. 201.

the “spell” of Zofloya, I argue that it is only possible for her to fall under this “influence” when her sexual desire awakens. The similarities between Dacre- and Lewis’s protagonist are inevitable, but the Monk too first starts losing his sovereignty the moment his sexual desires are “awakened”. Shapira argues that in contradiction to “Where Lewis used a beautiful woman (cross-dressing as a male novice) as the embodiment of creative ability, Dacre chooses a beautiful black man who is also a servant – a doubled foreignness that corresponds suggestively to her own status as both woman and Jew.”<sup>61</sup> This also doubles with the foreignness Dacre’s protagonist faces in the societal expectations of the female. In her portrayal of her female protagonist, Victoria’s downfall and the supposed moral of the novel, Dacre is in dialogue with Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of The Rights of Women*, even though Dacre was considered a conservative, and some of her poems and *Zofloya: or the Moor tends* to be considered with a misogynist and patriarchal tone to them, Dacre’s protagonist might never have “lost her sovereignty over herself”<sup>62</sup> to the devil if it was not for her marriage. Wollstonecraft argues that

Women would not then marry for a support, as men accept of places under government, and neglect the implied duties; nor would an attempt to earn their own subsistence, a most laudable one! sink them almost to the level of those poor abandoned creatures who live by prostitution.<sup>63</sup>,

this is a central element in the narrative of Dacre’s protagonist Victoria, when she flees from her absent mother, she is “forced” to marry Berenza, her reputation is ruined at the prosecution of her mother’s adultery. The market for female professionals at the time is extremely limited, and in order to survive she marries Berenza.

Later on, Victoria and Zofloya’s meetings become more frequent and are set in various places, but always in privacy. In these two scenes, the two participants find themselves at a sloping bank outside the residence in Venice, private from the rest of the households. Victoria is unhappy with her marriage, and is provided a poison by Zofloya that she will give her husband Berenza over the course of ten days.

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<sup>61</sup> Shapira, p. 201.

<sup>62</sup> Shapira, p. 201.

<sup>63</sup> Wollstonecraft, M, *A Vindication of The Rights of Women*, (1972), p. 145.



In Zofloya's speech to Victoria about her husband Berenza, the Moor frequently emphasises how their relationship has faltered, as well as emphasising how her husband took advantage of the position that Victoria was in when she first arrived in Venice. In his speech Zofloya says that Berenza "must now yield his place to another"<sup>64</sup>, and that he has "not a right to monopolize [...] the pleasures of others"<sup>65</sup>, playing into Victoria's feelings of no longer being happy with her husband, and finding that he no longer meets her needs. Zofloya's comment of Berenza monopolizing Victoria's feelings, playing into Victoria's desire and struggles with herself about being an agent for herself and her own freedom. Victoria does believe that the place he must yield for will be filled by Henriquez who she is obsessively in love with, very much a sort of courtly love. What she fails to realise is that Henriquez is not being present in her life accompanying her needs, but Zofloya is. She's slowly allowing herself to replace the position that her husband should have, with Zofloya, without her realising.

As their conversation about her relationship with her husband continues, Zofloya is seducing Victoria to grow fonder of him, and she does. "[...] like heavenly dew upon the earth, gratefully dost thou descend upon the ear of woman! Indescribable pleasure dilated the bosom of Victoria [...]"<sup>66</sup>. While the romantic feelings she experiences towards Henriquez is courtly, she dreams about him and how she would feel being in a relationship with him, she does not know him on an intimate level of any kind, and it is her own perception of what he is that she is falls in love with. Zofloya knows this as he visits her dreams, and in the spheres outside her dreams, he plays the part of how she envisions Henriquez. In this sense Zofloya, in this part of the novel is very much playing the part of the seductive Satan. What makes it interesting is that he is not being seductive in a straight forward manner.

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<sup>64</sup> Dacre, p.156.

<sup>65</sup> Dacre, p.156.

<sup>66</sup> Dacre, p.156.

Victoria as a character craves freedom, freedom of choice, and freedom to choose her own way of life. At various instances in the novel she attends to this freedom, one example being when she runs away from her mother and stepfather. However, even though Victoria used her freedom of choice to escape her imprisonment, she ends up in another one with her husband. Victoria experiences her relationship with her husband as restricting through her encounters with the Moor, who helps her experience that freedom that she longs for. “[...] with a kind of respectful freedom [...]”<sup>67</sup> he leads her by the arm from their secret meeting spot. Even though the action of being led from the place could be seen as a restrictive action, Victoria experiences freedom in it being Zofloya doing so. Victoria meets up with Zofloya again at their secret meeting spot to collect the final potion of the poison for her husband. With the frequent visits and them conspiring together, Zofloya believes that he has managed to seduce Victoria into his possession. Even though it might seem that Victoria is giving in to her relationship with Zofloya, she is not entirely familiar with being in the Moor’s possession. Zofloya precedes to say that “And I too, Signora, shall have proud cause to *mark* that day; for it gave to the unworthy slave, Zofloya, the most beautiful and enterprising of her sex.”<sup>68</sup> Victoria is surprised by the daring claim of the Moor, as she first considers herself in possession of herself, with a devotion to Henriquez and answers Zofloya “It gave thee my friendship [...] it gave thee my gratitude, not myself; for I am irrevocably, as thou knowest, devoted to another”<sup>69</sup>. In this scene, the power dynamics between the two characters is highlighted. In the average relationship between Satan and a customer, Satan tends to be the one with the power as he has powers over things that humans can’t access. This is the case in this scene between Zofloya and Victoria as well, Zofloya has the knowledge of some chemistry that Victoria could not have accessed without her acquaintance with the Moor. It might be that in this scene Zofloya is testing Victoria to see how successful he’s been with his seduction, and as it turns out, Victoria believes that she is still in control of her own life and actions. What Dacre is doing in the storyline of these two characters is interesting, as at the start of their timeline it seems to be of a manner that will lead into a love affair which is in Zofloya’s favour, creating sympathy for his character, but making Victoria the villain.

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<sup>67</sup> Dacre, p.157.

<sup>68</sup> Dacre, p.160.

<sup>69</sup> Dacre, p.160.

In the final scene of the novel, the Moor, Zofloya and Victoria have managed to escape bandittis with the help of Zofloya's satanic powers. They find themselves surrounded by mountains and are standing on a cliff. At this point, Berenza, Henriquez and Lilla are all seized by Victoria's satanic influence and the only person that remains from Victoria's acquaintances is the Moor, Zofloya. In this scene Zofloya reveals that he is Satan, and all along he was after seducing Victoria to become his property.

There is a tremendous change in Zofloya's character: all his charms and patience with Victoria appears to be lost. Victoria now encounters a Moor who is stern and demanding and who address her "[...] not in the gentle voice in which he had been wont to address her [...]"<sup>70</sup> The love, trust and relationship he has built with Victoria rapidly starts to diminish, and in the scene, she feels terrified and filled with despair. All that is left in the relationship between them is power, and Victoria is no longer the one in control, although she never was, but she was under the illusion that she was. What is peculiar in this scene, is that even though all that is left between the two characters is the control of power between the two, and Satan is clearly the one controlling the scene, he still persuades Victoria to believe that she is making a choice of free will, "[...] wilt thou, for that future, resign thyself entirely to me?".

Victoria has now realised that she might never been the one in power of her freedom, and feels remorse for the two men she killed. She has no pity for Lilla, but the hope she has for the freedom of her own choice still remains. "am I not already in thy power – can I chuse then but be thin"<sup>71</sup>. The reason Victoria can still hold the assumption that she might have a choice in the matter is because Zofloya is allowing her to do so. As Satan, Zofloya is a manipulative and calculating figure who has used his power, influence, and seduction to control those around him, primarily Victoria. And his offer in this scene to save Victoria from all future harm is, in reality, a ploy to gain complete control over her. Meanwhile, the extent of Victoria's vulnerability is revealed, and she has allowed herself to be drawn into Zofloya's web of deceit with no option to break free. Even though she receives an offer, the promise that Zofloya will relieve her of all future suffering, comes at a high cost. In order to receive Zofloya's offer, Victoria would have to give up her freedom and agency, and surrender

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<sup>70</sup> Dacre, p. 266.

<sup>71</sup> Dacre, p.266.

herself entirely to Zofloya. The final scene highlights the manipulative nature of what Zofloya's character has become, and Victoria's vulnerability of the male characters surrounding her. It is a pivotal moment in the novel where the true extent of what being the character Satan is revealed, and the power that such a character has gained over the character that is pursued, which sets the stage for the novel's conclusion where women are advised to stay and be happy in their marriages and not pursue freedom or happiness, because they might end up making deals with the devil.

## 2.2 The Monk – Matthew Lewis

In *The Monk*, an early gothic novel by Matthew Lewis, first published in 1796. Satan is not a consistent character throughout the novel, but the Monk Ambrosio encounters him two times. The Satanic presence throughout the novel is mainly represented in Matilda, a devious woman who seduces the Monk and assists him on his vicious journey, Matilda acts as an intermediary between the Monk and Satan, tempting the Monk to give into his desires and eventually give his soul to Satan.

When first published even though Lewis was "a man of the periphery"<sup>72</sup>, his novel *The Monk* was received by the tremendous reactions to the graphic descriptions unfolding in the novel, as much so that Lewis altered and published his novel anew four times, leaving out the most critiqued passages.<sup>73</sup> The critics that he received commented on several of the novel's controversial topics, one of them being the novel's portrayal of the Catholic church's hypocrisy, and Lewis' critic to the Catholic church as an institution.<sup>74</sup> Lewis especially received critic on his commentary of the edited Bible. Most readers at the time of when Lewis published his novel, were female readers. As reading novels were at the time mainly considered a feminine pastime, critics were worried that Lewis' novel would pollute women's minds, and encourage behaviour not suitable by a female in the Romantic period, as women

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<sup>72</sup> Kiely, p. 98.

<sup>73</sup> Shapira, p. 184.

<sup>74</sup> Lewis, p.10.

were expected to operate within the patriarchal gender norms.<sup>75</sup>

On the concept of Romance and Love, the novel does not offer a straight forward love interest between the protagonist and the character Satan, but the satanic concepts approach to Romance/Love in this novel is presented in symbols of sexual desire, obsession and longing, which aligns with the Miltonic Satan. Apart from being a Romance, the concept of love is somewhat represented in the relationship between Matilda and Ambrosio, first between the two characters, and then in Mathilda's support of Ambrosio's pursuit of his passionate "love" of Antonia. This love or adoration is more of courtly art, where the monk seems to adore this woman he has never met more than life, and has a desire towards her. Matilda is encouraging Ambrosio to play into the feelings and desires of the monk, and tempts him to play into them in a cunning manner.

The first type of romantic relationship experienced by the protagonist Ambrosio of Satanic character in Matthew Lewis *The Monk*, is the relationship between him and the character Matilda/Rosario which is later revealed as a woman with demonic characteristics. At this point in the narrative Matilda has revealed her disguise as Rosario. And proclaimed her romantic feelings for Ambrosio. In the following scene, Lewis uses foreshadowing to suggest that the relationship between these two characters might be more complex than just a romantic flourish between the two of them. Ambrosio who has been a dedicated, devoted monk up until this point, suddenly experiences that he is no longer "[...] proof against temptation"<sup>76</sup>, and that he is "[...] unable to contend with those passions from which he falsely thought himself exempted."<sup>77</sup>. The experience is suddenly to Ambrosio, due to the gendered ambiguity of the satanic Rosario/Matilda, who Ambrosio was convinced of as a man. Rosario and Ambrosio shares a homosocial bond, and Ambrosio refers to Rosario as

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<sup>75</sup> Craciun, p. 120.

<sup>76</sup> Lewis, Matthew, *The Monk*, (1796), Ed. Christopher Maclachlan, London, Penguin Books, 1998, p. 62.

<sup>77</sup> Lewis, p. 62.

“my son”<sup>78</sup>. Within the Catholic church abbots as Ambrosio were often considered fathers of the friars in the monastery, leading by patriarchal example and guiding the friars in their religious beliefs.<sup>79</sup> The reveal of Rosario being a Matilda tests Ambrosio in a manner that he has not yet experienced, as he has spent his entire life within the monastery. With this instance, Lewis expands the possibilities for Ambrosio’s narrative, as it brings forth emotions that he believed he did not possess. Ambrosio transgresses from being a protagonist leading a predictable narrative within protected frames, to suddenly being exposed to new feelings, with this Lewis expand the possibilities for the character of Ambrosio, and he’s now receptive to influences from the outside world. Lewis’ protagonist, is conscious of what might happen if he gives in to the seduction of the demonic Matilda, “[...] you are but too interesting, too amiable! I should love you [...] my bosom would become prey of desires [...]”<sup>80</sup>, with this the protagonist foreshadows what is to happen if the character Matilda continues to be in his presence, meaning that he is aware of the danger of the character.

In his book *The Romantic Novel in England*, Robert Kiely encompasses the Romantic period through presenting the ideas of the period in relation to twelve works of the time. In his chapter about Matthew Lewis’ *The Monk*, he comments that “Much of the “madness” of the *roman noir* imitates and caters to the madness of an unstable society. Despite the theatrically and superficial contrivance of a book like *The Monk*, there is a sense in which it may be called realistic.”<sup>81</sup>, Kiely comments on the ‘spectacle’<sup>82</sup> that is being displayed by Lewis, that makes his novel almost theatrical. The reality encountered underneath Lewis’ absurdity, is consistent with the societal debate in the Romantic period. The most obvious societal debate displayed in Lewis’ novel is the critique he places on the catholic church, Britain at the time was protestant and past the shift from the heritage of the Enlightenment, religion was believed to be a more private and individual matter than that of society. Lewis’ also reflects the societal

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<sup>78</sup> Lewis, p. 40.

<sup>79</sup> Murphy, Lauren L., *Patriarchal Structures in Gothic Fiction, 1770-1820*, MA thesis, Master of Arts, Florida, The Florida State University, 2006. p. 30.

<sup>80</sup> Lewis, p. 63.

<sup>81</sup> Kiely, p. 103.

<sup>82</sup> Shapira, p. 179.

and political debate of gender and the roles of gender at the time. Blakemore comments that “the Catholic emphasis on monastic male chastity [...] has its correspondence in female virginity and virtue—the subject of so many eighteenth-century conduct books and novels”<sup>83</sup>, on the theme of catholic male chastity Ambrosio, the perfect monk, is directly linked to the sublime picture of Antonia, the young female that before Ambrosio’s path down the trail of sin is equally perfect in her virtues as Ambrosio. The chastity of men within the catholic church according to Blakemore’s argument, make them transgress from their expected role as men to be situated in a “feminine” position”<sup>84</sup>. In agreement to Wollstonecraft’s argument of the natural women where she argues that had women been “left in a state nearer to nature.”<sup>85</sup>, instead of the societal patriarchal expectations of women as timid, virtuous being who excised only to serve men, that the moral of women would have been improved. Ambrosio is left in an unnatural suppressed position for his sex, one that he is not able to withhold. Watkins similarly comments on the power of institutional religions power over the societal norms of gender, “[...] in which class and gender stratification are absolute, held in place by a powerful system of religious values, there is no place for Matilda [...]”<sup>86</sup>, there is no place for Ambrosio either, when relieved from his life in suppression to his ‘natural’ gender role as a man, he becomes too much of a man.

In the interest of Ambrosio’s insecurities regarding the natural state of his sex, Matilda is discharged from her service as a monk, so Ambrosio can avoid addressing the temptation Matilda inflict. In her leaving the monastery she asks Ambrosio of a token of his regard, that she can carry with her, specifically a “rose”<sup>87</sup>. Similar to Dacre’s garden scene, the medieval influence is present in Lewis’ scene. Matilda asks Ambrosio for a symbol of his love and

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<sup>83</sup> Blakemore, Steven, *Matthew Lewis’s Black Mass: Sexual, Religious, Inversion in “The Monk”*” Studying the Novel, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, vol. 30, no. 4, 1998, p. 522.

<sup>84</sup> Blakemore, p. 522.

<sup>85</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 67.

<sup>86</sup> Watkins, Daniel P., *Social Hierarchy in Matthew Lewis’s “The Monk”*” *Studies in the Novel*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, vol.18, no. 2, 1986, p. 123.

<sup>87</sup> Lewis, p. 64.

courtship, and Ambrosio who has thought about the temptation of Matilda, is happily complicit, as long as she leaves the premises. While Dacre is more progressive in her portrayal of the garden of Eve, Lewis reproduce the elements from the biblical event, “concealed among the roses – a serpent-”<sup>88</sup>, the poisonous serpent bites Ambrosio, and his life is in danger. The satanic Matilda uses her cunning abilities to save Ambrosio’s life, like that Matilda is the one who enters the role as the ‘knight in shining armour’. The ambiguity of Matilda as Lewis’ Satan is her reoccurring transgression between gender roles. Shapira comments this about relationship with Satan and other demonic characters “[...] this is most clear in the disturbing ease with which these mysterious figures change their shape, their size, and their sex.”<sup>89</sup>. The satanic Matilda, first introduced as Rosario, does not just transgress the gendered norm in her physical appearance, the transgression is even more striking in the way she portrays herself, and in the dynamic between her and the Monk. Whilst being seduced by Matilda, Ambrosio is aware that he is being seduced by a power that is potentially harmful to his way of life. Whilst “[...] he dreaded the melodious seduction of her voice”<sup>90</sup>, as he feels that he is “incapable of treating you with indifference; [...]”<sup>91</sup>. Matilda as the cunning satanic character of Lewis’s novel, is vicious in her satanic seduction of the monk when she reveals her true sex, from their homosocial relationship Matilda is aware of Ambrosio’s virtuous way of life, and his lack of exposure to the world outside the monastery. In her gender reveal to Ambrosio, she threatens to stab herself with a dagger when he refuses her initial try to continue to be a part of the monastery. In this dramatic unfolding, Ambrosio is able to see Matilda’s breasts,

The moon-beams darting full upon it enabled the monk to observe its dazzling whiteness: his eye dwelt with insatiable avidity upon the beauteous orb: a sensation till then unknown filled his heart with a mixture of anxiety and delight; a raging fire shot through every limb; the blood boiled in his veins, and a thousand wild wishes bewildered his imagination<sup>92</sup>,

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<sup>88</sup> Lewis, p. 65.

<sup>89</sup> Shapira, p. 118.

<sup>90</sup> Lewis, p. 62.

<sup>91</sup> Lewis, p. 63.

<sup>92</sup> Lewis, p. 60.



Ambrosio is struck by the sublime beauty of a woman at once, and his devotion to the satanic relationship, is instant, even though Ambrosio is not aware of the impact the nudity of Matilda has on him.

The most interesting part about the satanic Matilda is what Lewis accomplishes in regard of the ambiguous gender roles, and the transgression back and forth between the patriarchal societal norms of gender roles. Especially at a time of severe societal anxieties about “masculine women and feminine men”<sup>93</sup>, Lewis adopt both the anxiety of the masculine woman and the feminine man in the characters of Matilda and Ambrosio. As a chaste monk, Ambrosio is from the start situated in a feminine position, as a chaste monk Ambrosio lives his life parallel to the patriarchal ideal of the virgin.<sup>94</sup> It is not just in him living a chaste life the gendered transgressions of Ambrosio embrace, the feminine side of Ambrosio is oblivious to the desires of the world, and in his relationships with Matilda, he takes on the feminine role of submission. “In addition, Ambrosio's sexual surrender, "Do with me what you will"<sup>95</sup>, giving up his natural integrity birthed a man to Matilda. As Ambrosio’s narrative progress he takes back more of his masculine role, after engaging in the sexual relationship with Matilda, Ambrosio’s masculinity increases. Not in relation to Matilda, but in relation to the rest of his world. Blakemore argues that Ambrosio “is the hero too large for any of the roles which society or nature provides for him.”<sup>96</sup>, by supressing his natural masculinity for thirty years when he finally lets his masculinity show, the masculinity erupts and is overrated. Ambrosio’s hunt to subdue his masculine desires, he becomes to masculine for the world.

Simultaneously as Ambrosio transgress in the nature of femininity, the satanic Matilda transgress the nature of masculinity. As the stand in for Satan in the pursuit of Ambrosio’s

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<sup>93</sup> Blakemore, p. 521.

<sup>94</sup> Blakemore, p. 522.

<sup>95</sup> Blakemore, p. 271.

<sup>96</sup> Kiely, p. 108.

soul, the satanic Matilda is the “masculine seducer who wants to stain Ambrosio’s virtue”<sup>97</sup>. Matilda pursue Ambrosio in the quest of his love and maybe more importantly his sexual virtue. “His authority and her sex ever stand between them and rational convers.”<sup>98</sup>, on the subject of interplay between the sexes Wollstonecraft portrays the societal patriarchal expectation of men, or the masculine being the authority between the two sexes. In Matilda and Ambrosio’s relationship, Matilda is the one initiating a relationship.

Lewis’s scene of the Black Mass in *The Monk*, is a pivotal moment in the novel and especially in the narrative of the Monk, Ambrosio, and in his relationship with the demon Matilda. Ambrosio and Matilda has leading up to this moment shared intimate moments together, but the Monks romantic interest has now transferred to Antonia, a virgin who is equally ignorant of the world and sexual desires as the Monk used to be. Ambrosio and Matilda still share a deep connection, and the demon function as a kind of mentor in the monk’s pursuit of his love interest. What’s interesting in the relationship between the demon and Ambrosio is that he always seem to reflect and be aware of the seduction and temptation that she offers, “I will not follow you to the sepulchre, or accept the services of your infernal agents.”<sup>99</sup>. Ambrosio knows that Matilda is of satanic character, and he still keeps giving in to his desire and follows Matilda towards eternal damnation, “‘I yield!’ [...] I follow you! Do with me what you will!”<sup>100</sup>, by *yielding* to Matilda he gives up the entire integrity of the character that he is supposed to be, the piteous delicate monk, who’s vowed his whole life to the church. The change of character is not something he has been achieved by a seductive devil, it is a change that he makes from his own desires, and reach out to the satanic powers surrounding him, which Ambrosio is aware of being Satan.

In the scene of the Black Mass, Matilda change from her religious clothing to a special outfit for the Black Mass, the outfit she changes into is highly symbolic and serves to reinforce her role as a temptress and agent of Satan, as well as making the gender roles in the

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<sup>97</sup> Blakemore, p. 525.

<sup>98</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 63.

<sup>99</sup> Lewis, p. 231.

<sup>100</sup> Lewis, p. 232.

scene ambiguous. She wears “sable robe”<sup>101</sup> revealing her arms and neck, the sable robe with the “unknown characters”<sup>102</sup>, is black which associates her to darkness and evil. Matilda’s hair is “loose and flowed wildly”<sup>103</sup>, the revealing nature of her outfit reflects her role as a temptress, and the sexual desires she has used for tempting the monk earlier in their acquaintance. Most interestingly Matilda is wearing a “girdle of precious stones, in which was fixed a poniard”<sup>104</sup>, the symbolism of the poniard she’s wearing as well as holding a “golden wand”<sup>105</sup> is phallic symbolism, adding to the confusion of gender roles between the two characters. Matilda is the one of power in this scene, as well as in the relationship between the her and Ambrosio. Ambrosio gives up his power, taking a submissive role when he chose to *yield* to Matilda.

Throughout the novel, Lewis uses gothic elements such as obscure settings, supernatural occurrences, the gothic double and heightened emotions to create an unsettling atmosphere. However, the language in the Black Mass scene is particularly vivid and descriptive, illustrating the importance of the scene in the narrative of the Monk, this is the first time he encounters Satan. Lewis draws parallels between the ritual happening in the Black Mass performed by Matilda, and the one the Wandering Jew performs in the parallel story in the novel to drive away the bleeding nun. In the scene, there is a strong suggestion of duality, were Ambrosio is wary of meeting with Satan, but gets seduced by the pleasing character he encounters together with Matilda. As when Rosario first revealed himself as Matilda, Ambrosio sense foreboding and unease for the scene he is partaking in, “expecting that some dreadful apparition would meet his eyes”<sup>106</sup>, this suggest that he either is aware of the weight and consequence of the situation, or it could be that he feels this way due to his Christian perception of what a ritual of this character might be. Either way Ambrosio prepares himself for a terrifying encounter. Ambrosio gets so overwhelmed by the ritual Matilda

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<sup>101</sup> Lewis, p. 235.

<sup>102</sup> Lewis, p. 235.

<sup>103</sup> Lewis, p. 235.

<sup>104</sup> Lewis, p. 235.

<sup>105</sup> Lewis, p. 235.

<sup>106</sup> Lewis, p. 237.

performs that he is “unable to support himself”<sup>107</sup>, the monk is being swept away by forces beyond his control. Ambrosio experiences positive affirmation when “a full strain of melodious music sounded in the air”<sup>108</sup>, the music adds to the sense of otherworldliness and magic that surrounds the scene, as well as Ambrosio experience this as pleasant, and the music is a stark contrast to the dark and evil nature of the ritual which the monk expected. Ambrosio gets seduced by “a figure more beautiful than fancy’s pencil ever drew”<sup>109</sup>, this is his first encounter with the actual Satan, and Ambrosio is enchanted by the spirit’s beauty and drawn in by his presence, without his knowing he is being seduced by Satan. Ambrosio’s expectation of the Black Mass is shattered by Satan’s seduction and his moral compass is being altered by his exposure to temptation and is by this ritual being drawn further into darkness and corruption than he has already been by Matilda.

In the final scene of Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk*, Ambrosio faces two separate encounters of Satanic character. The first encounter is between Ambrosio and the demonic Matilda, Matilda tells Ambrosio that she has just signed a contract with Satan, and offers Ambrosio to do the same. The second encounter is between Satan and Ambrosio as he is tempted to sign the contract to flee the consequences of the inquisition. The encounter between Ambrosio and the satanic Matilda in the dungeons before the verdict of The Inquisition, there is a change in Matilda’s character. She has now fully transitioned to a woman and “wore a female dress, at once elegant and splendid; a profusion of diamonds blazed upon her robes, and her hair was confined by a coronet of roses.”<sup>110</sup>, she now appears as she once did when she first started her quest on seducing Ambrosio, to give into his desires. “Every beauty which he had seen appeared embellished; and those still concealed fancy represented to him in glowing colours”<sup>111</sup>. Matilda’s transgression in her appearance is ceased to be, and she now appears as the woman she is. Matilda has reclaimed her gender, and appears for Ambrosio as an angelic female. In her final attempt to deceive him to sign a contract with Lucifer. She’s wearing a floral crown of roses, Lewis uses the medieval symbol of roses, of passionate desire and love. The demonic Matilda is once again, as when she first announced her gender for Ambrosio

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<sup>107</sup> Lewis, p. 237.

<sup>108</sup> Lewis, p. 237.

<sup>109</sup> Lewis, p. 237.

<sup>110</sup> Lewis, p.365.

<sup>111</sup> Lewis, p. 71.

trying to convince the monk that he should give in to his desires. Ambrosio's response to Matilda's new appearance is one where he feels "inspired"<sup>112</sup> with "awe"<sup>113</sup>, he once again as when he first got to know the true gender of Matilda, feels compelled to give in to his desire, which has led to his downfall, and condemnation of the purist life he used to live. In the progress of the relationship between Matilda and Ambrosio, it is interesting how she first starts out as his lover, then progress to become is mentor in his pursuit of the perfect ideal of bourgeois England expectations of a woman at the time, and when she's ceased once again pursue him on a romantic level, or at least one of sexual desire. Matilda as a satanic character is quite interesting, even though she does not have a clear progression as a character is the contradiction surrounding her appearance as a character, she's ambiguous. Matilda first appears as a the disguised monk Rosario, a male, when Ambrosio finds out that she is actually a female, she asks him to think of her as a man. They then proceed to enter a sexual/romantic relationship which with her request to view her as a man, has a homoerotic implication to it. As the narrative progress, Matilda keeps claiming that she is a human, while Satan at the very end informs Ambrosio that she is in fact a demon, that he placed in the narrative of the monk, to seduce him to ultimate damnation.

In the final scene of Ambrosio's narrative, he encounters the actual character of Satan twice. For both of the encounters the monk seeks out and summons Satan by himself by reading four lines backwards from a book, he has an anxious feeling of the summoning of Satan "whom he wished, yet dreaded to behold"<sup>114</sup>, the way that Satan appears this time is significantly different from when he appeared during the Black Mass initiated by Matilda. Lewis's language in describing the summoning is equally vivid, but the scene is of opposite character. "A loud burst of thunder was heard, the prison shook to its very foundation, a blaze of lightning flashed through the cell, and in the next moment, borne upon sulphurous whirlwinds, Lucifer stood before him a second time."<sup>115</sup>, while the scene of the Black Mass initiated by the Satanic Matilda, was of a pleasant character, the scene the monk finds himself in this time is frightening, this could be to the nature of the monk's desperation that Satan no

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<sup>112</sup> Lewis, p. 365.

<sup>113</sup> Lewis, p. 365.

<sup>114</sup> Lewis, p. 369.

<sup>115</sup> Lewis, p. 369.

longer has an interest in seducing or deceiving Ambrosio to take morally bad choices, the choices that lead to his morally bad has already been made, and Satan is the monks last option to escape the consequences of him giving into his desires and sinful behaviour. The appearance of Satan himself has changed drastically since their first meeting, Satan now appear in “all the ugliness which since his fall from heaven had been his portion”<sup>116</sup>, in a “gigantic form”<sup>117</sup>, with “hands and feet were armed with long talons”<sup>118</sup> and “Fury glared in his eyes,”<sup>119</sup>, while Satan’s previous form had a sense of intriguing mystery to him, there is at this point no doubt that Ambrosio is dealing with the devil, and the perception of what Satan is supposed to be. Even though Ambrosio summoned Satan, he does not sign over his soul until the second time he summons him. Ultimately, Ambrosio’s fall is due to his lack of knowledge about the worlds desire, and the impact of exposure to these desires. In the end, Ambrosio is consumed by the very forces that that he sought to take advantage from, and the final scene represents the condemnation of his actions and stand as a testament to the destructive power of sin and desire.

## 2.3 Conclusion Love/Romance

In regards of the relationship between Satan and the protagonists of Lewis and Dacre, both protagonists engage in some sort of relationship with Satan. Dacre’s satanic relationship is portrayed with Satan as a unlucky suitor, who longs for the love of the protagonist Victoria, but does not seem to be able to receive it. At least not until all of the characters surrounding the two protagonists are killed by Victoria’s hand. The impact on Victoria of the satanic relationship in Dacre’s novel, is displayed in her drift towards becoming an ‘unnatural’ woman, ending up so far from the societal norm of female expression that she ends up as the pray of Satan. In Lewis’s narrative the relationship between the protagonist and the satanic seducer, develops due to the persistent approach from the satanic Matilda, she refuses to leave Ambrosio in his state of virtue. Ambrosio by engaging in the satanic relationship with

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<sup>116</sup> Lewis, p. 369.

<sup>117</sup> Lewis, p. 369.

<sup>118</sup> Lewis, p. 369.

<sup>119</sup> Lewis, p. 369.

Matilda, seems to give up all sense of self control, and constantly craves more than what Matilda can offer.

In contrast to Dacre's Satan which is ambiguous up until the very last page, Lewis's Satan is not ambiguous at all, both the character Satan and his "helper" Matilda is set characters who does not have a character development at all, and operate within the creative framework of what the character Satan should be. The ambiguous part of Lewis's satanic interpretation, is the perception of gender roles, and how gender is perceived in the novel. Also, reflecting societal norms, were women or feminine characters are more prone to the seduction of Satan.

## Chapter 3 Wandering

You have already suffered your corrupt imagination to wander after man!

(Dacre, p. 51)

On the concept of wandering and the satanic figure Matilda in Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* and Zofloya in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor*, the satanic wandering is not directly engaged by the characters portrayed as Satan. However, satanic wandering does occur, and it is engaged by the characters who share a personal relationship with Satan or the character representing Satan in the novels. The satanic wandering is performed by the protagonists, Ambrosio and Victoria. Both Lewis' and Dacre's protagonists engage with the concept of wandering in a different manner after they become familiar with Satan; Ambrosio by actually leaving the walls of the monastery, and Victoria by starting to wander with a different motivation than her previous walk to Venice. The mobility of the satanic characters in the two novels are extremely limited, with Matilda engaging with a satanic wandering through a magic mirror<sup>120</sup> where she watches over Ambrosio, and to this extent 'wanders' with him, indicating that the wandering performed by Ambrosio is actually linked with the satanic Matilda. It is similar with Dacre's *Zofloya*, the mobility of Zofloya is tied to the protagonist Victoria. Zofloya does have a satanic power of suddenly appearing places, as if summoned by Victoria, the sudden appearance is always in relation to the scenes he shares with Victoria. The interesting part about satanic wandering in Dacre's and Lewis' novels are how it transgresses and affects the characters Ambrosio and Matilda, that Satan romantically pursues. Using theories of the literary concept of wandering, I aim to explore how satanic wandering is expressed in the protagonists of Lewis and Dacre.

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<sup>120</sup> Lewis, p. 232.



### 3.1 Wandering mind

During the Romantic period the split dualism of mind and body were still a very realistic worldview, with regards to wandering, which meant that minds would inhabit the ability to wander by its own initiative.<sup>121</sup> In the Romantic period, and in the context of the age of Enlightenment, a new way of defining mind-wandering emerged. This resulted in two opposite definitions of the term, where the preceding definition was utterly bad, and the new definition was utterly positive.<sup>122</sup> Natalie Philips describes the eighteenth and early nineteenth century view of mind wandering in her book *Distraction*, a comprehensive study of attention and distraction in eighteenth century literature, as dualistic. Where the concept of thoughts that wandered could be “described either as a failure of cognitive control— a drifting from task that connotes a loose rein on one’s thought— or as part of attention’s temporal limits”<sup>123</sup>. In regards to Satan, Baillie in the chapter “*Tormented Shadow*”<sup>124</sup>, states that Satan at instances defined as a shadow exists and could occur “as a part of the unconscious mind”<sup>125</sup>. An unconscious mind is a mind, according to the general term, that is not awake and aware, or exists without realising. With this, the shadow of Satan can be a part of one’s mind without realising. The Romantic view and approach to mind wandering was that it was important to “not to indulge their wandering minds.”<sup>126</sup>, as it was considered “a sinful habit to be constrained for the sake of the soul’s redemption”<sup>127</sup>. One of the first OED entry’s on the wandering mind from 1858 states as follows:

“The mind wanderings of poor [...] were of great importance in making out a case

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<sup>121</sup> Morris, David Brown, *Wanderers: Literature, Culture and the Open Road*, 1st ed. London, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021, p. 43.

<sup>122</sup> Phillips, Natalie M., *Distraction : Problems of Attention in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016, p. 30.

<sup>123</sup> Philips, p. 31.

<sup>124</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

<sup>125</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

<sup>126</sup> Phillips, p. 30.

<sup>127</sup> Philips, p. 32.

against him.”<sup>128</sup>. This could be an indication that as recent as 1858, the predominant view of a wandering mind is of the earlier definition, to behold a wandering mind as faulty, and could even be used in court to imprison someone.

In a contra dictionary manner, the anti-wanderer, is described as someone with a “steady mind”<sup>129</sup>, the opposite to the wandering, unconscious mind. According to Wollstonecraft, the sublime women at the time were prone to have “their thoughts turn on things calculated to excite emotion and feeling, when they should reason, their conduct is unstable, and their opinions are wavering – not the wavering product by deliberation or progressive views, but by contradictory emotions.”<sup>130</sup>. A mind who were not regarded a steady mind, but a wavering mind, could easier fall in to a state of the unconscious. Making these characters more accessible to the state of a wandering mind. “[...] evil lies ungoverned in human nature, only suppressed by social and moral rules of conduct [...]”<sup>131</sup>, as Dacre’s and Lewis’s protagonists are already ‘flawed’, they are extra prone to become victims of a wandering mind, when Satan enters their narrative, their minds become prey to the satanic wandering expressed in a wandering mind.

In Ambrosio’s slow but steady journey towards hell and committing his soul to Satan, he wanders down a path where we encounter several different types of wandering. The wandering of Ambrosio’s mind might be the most significant, after he choose to engage in a relationship with the satanic Matilda, his mind start to drift from his previously focused mind, towards periods of unconscious state. In his “failure of cognitive control”<sup>132</sup>, Satan as in the character Matilda, in terms of Baillie’s “tormented shadow”<sup>133</sup>, has the ability to enter Ambrosio’s wandering mind, establishing a deeper sense of connection between the two characters. The instance of Ambrosio’s wandering mind is something that he starts to

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<sup>128</sup> Hollingshead, J, ”wandering-mind”, OED online, July 1858, Oxford University, (accessed May 09, 2023)

<sup>129</sup> Morris, p. 87.

<sup>130</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 67.

<sup>131</sup> Baillie, p. 108.

<sup>132</sup> Philips, p. 31.

<sup>133</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

experience before his first actual meeting with Matilda as a woman, “May I not be tempted from those paths, which till now I have pursued without one moment’s wandering?”<sup>134</sup> he is at the point homosocial with Rosario, and since Matilda is the cross dresser as Rosario, the possibility of influence and taking control over his unconscious mind is present. His first encounter with the wandering mind is not in connection with Lewis’s satanic character, even though they are present in each other’s narrative, Rosario does not initiate something that would influence Ambrosio to let his mind wander. Ambrosio is already flawed in his persona, in terms of the decorum of a monk practising in the Romantic period, before his flourishing relationship with the satanic Rosario/Matilda, and satanic influence over his mind and body. Ambrosio’s pre-satanic flaw is that of vanity and self-admiration, with thoughts of “How powerful an effect did my discourse produce [...]”<sup>135</sup>, “[...] they loaded me with benedictions [...]”<sup>136</sup>, and “[...] pronounced me the sole uncorrupted pillar”<sup>137</sup>, Ambrosio thinks of himself as being the perfect monk in all ways, so ignorant of himself that he does not realise that he is being sinful in allowing his mind to wander to his ‘perfect’ performance. Ambrosio questions himself in regards of his moment of min-wandering, “Am I not a man, whose nature is frail and prone to error?”<sup>138</sup>, he excuses his mind wandering into vanity over his accomplishments as a monk, with the principal that he is only human. With Lewis’s mockery of the Catholic church, the social hierarchy approach in his novel *The Monk* would be compliable with the actual nineteenth century social hierarchy in Spain at the time, where the novel is set. “[...] the reality that Catholic “fathers had to answer to no one”<sup>139</sup>, the Catholic ‘fathers’ is a reference and equivalent with priests, monks and in general men within the Catholic church of some sort of higher religious position. The social position of men with these roles in nineteenth century Spain could be considered equivalent with the position of a family of money in the Romantic England. Wollstonecraft comments that the education of higher positioned members of society, tended to leave them “vain and helpless”<sup>140</sup>, in thus lacking the proper education to become eminent human beings, this regarding the education of

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<sup>134</sup> Lewis, p. 39.

<sup>135</sup> Lewis, p. 39.

<sup>136</sup> Lewis, p. 39.

<sup>137</sup> Lewis, p. 39.

<sup>138</sup> Lewis, p. 39.

<sup>139</sup> Murphy, p. 30.

<sup>140</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 4.

women of a certain position in society. The education of monks similar to the education of women, would be executed with a certain sense of motive, Ambrosio in his education is ignorant to the world outside the monastery, leaving him without the proper knowledge to become a dignified member of society. His character is simply not fit to withstand the temptations of worldly order. This makes the Monk an easy target for Satan, as he would be an easy subject for seduction, he does not have knowledge of how to deal with temptation.

Similarly, Dacre's Victoria is also a flawed character pre-satanic influence. Early in Dacre's novel Victoria is recognised by her mother to have a wandering mind,

Victoria was a girl of no common feelings – her ideas wildly wandered, and to every circumstance and situation she gave rather the vivid colouring of her heated imagination, than that of truth.<sup>141</sup>

as early as the first chapter, Victoria with her “heated imagination”<sup>142</sup> is established as a flawed persona, and as a “unfemale”<sup>143</sup> as well. A women living during the Romantic period were supposed to be timid, a household wife and her job was to stay at home to take care of the household and be educating her children, unless the family had the means to hire a governess. Her mind where expected to be concerned about the household, not wandering in imaginative state. Just like Ambrosio, Victoria's flawed mind, is not just in her nature, she also suffers a lack of education. Wollstonecraft argues that in regard of female education, as its curriculum would be formed to educate timid and proper wives, that the young girls who received proper education at best turned out as “disposed romantics”<sup>144</sup>, and the unfortunate girls who did not receive a proper education, according to Wollstonecraft most of young girls,

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<sup>141</sup> Dacre, p. 28.

<sup>142</sup> Dacre, p. 28.

<sup>143</sup> Craciun, p. 131

<sup>144</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 78.

ended up “vain and mean.”<sup>145</sup>. With the Romantic periods view in regards of a wandering mind as “sinful”<sup>146</sup>, in contradiction to Ambrosio’s first sin of enabling his mind to wander in vanity, the first sin of wandering is not committed by Dacre’s protagonist Victoria, but she is the one ultimately affected by the punishment of this sin. Horrocks argues that the first sin committed in Dacre’s *Zofloya, or the Moor* is committed by Victoria’s mother with her “wandering [...] affections away from her husband and children”<sup>147</sup>. The result of Victoria mothers wandering affection and insufficient education of her children, leads to Victoria having a lack of education and did not have the knowledge to operate within the societal norms of a women in the Romantic period. Victoria is thus a character with a wandering mind, prone to her mind being unconscious at times. It is in Victoria’s unconscious state that she first encounters Zofloya, Satan, “[...] as if from the midst of them, she beheld advancing a Moor [...] she stumbled and awoke”<sup>148</sup>.

As Baillie states with her argument about the “Tormented Shadow”<sup>149</sup>, in the dreams and in the unconscious, wandering mind of humans is were characters are most at risk of falling under the spell of Satan, if they so choose to engage and allow the wandering of their minds to continue. Zofloya keeps visiting Victoria in her wandering mind, “[...] the Moor she had beheld in her preceding dream appeared to start between them”<sup>150</sup>, and when she is in this unconscious state, he offers her everything she desires. Victoria flawed by her lack of a proper upbringing, with a mother who lead by example as a woman driven by her amorous and romantic desires, “[...] young as you are, you have already suffered your corrupt imagination to wander after man!”<sup>151</sup>, from a young age Victoria were already suffering from her wandering mind, in pursue of romance. Dacre’s Satan, Zofloya, does not pursue a virtuous married woman, with a steady mind, he chooses to pursue a character who already from

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<sup>145</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 78.

<sup>146</sup> Phillips, p. 30.

<sup>147</sup> Horrocks, p. 15.

<sup>148</sup> Dacre, p. 136.

<sup>149</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

<sup>150</sup> Dacre, p.136.

<sup>151</sup> Dacre, p. 51.

childhood does not meet the societal standard, and already has tendencies to a flawed mind. Just like Lewis's Satan, the prey of Satan's desire is at easy access.

Posterior to being seduced by Lewis's satanic Matilda, the occasions of Ambrosio's wandering mind increases. The reason for this, is that Matilda has managed to be an established part of Ambrosio's unconscious mind, and has led him to commit another sin, more tempting than that of vanity, Ambrosio is after engaging in the relationship with Matilda prone to mind-wander to a place driven by desire. "He strove to pray: his bosom no longer glowed with devotion: his thoughts insensibly wandered to Matilda's secret charms."<sup>152</sup>, Ambrosio is no longer devoted to his tasks as a monk, due to the relationship he has entered with Matilda. Ambrosio has to mask his transgression, as he is the abbot of the monastery, he compensate for his wandering mind by keeping up his exterior devotion, trying to avoid suspicion among his fellow friars. "The better to cloak his transgression, he redoubled his pretensions to the semblance of virtue, and never appeared more devoted to heaven [...]."<sup>153</sup>, the transgression Ambrosio experiences is that of a sinner, he no longer is purely devoted to God, his image has been flawed. At this instance in Lewis's narrative for the protagonist Ambrosio, the motivation of Ambrosio's wandering mind is driven by the desire of sexual pleasure. Through his unconscious mind the "Tormented wanderer"<sup>154</sup>, the satanic Matilda has managed through the initiation of a romantic relationship to enter Ambrosio's wandering mind, and is at this point influencing his path forward. The monk is no longer in control over his own narrative, and path, Ambrosio has by "giving up control"<sup>155</sup> over his minds wandering, to Matilda. Matilda frequently steers Ambrosio's wandering mind, making him an "unscrupulous consumer"<sup>156</sup> for sexual pleasure.

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<sup>152</sup> Lewis, pp. 195-196.

<sup>153</sup> Lewis, pp. 195-196.

<sup>154</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

<sup>155</sup> Morris, p. xi.

<sup>156</sup> Shapira, p. 179.

At several points in Lewis's narrative, the satanic character Matilda is portrayed with qualities deprived of the abnormal satanic traits she tends to demonstrate. With this Lewis deceives both the protagonist and the readers, to make the satanic resemblance of Matilda ambiguous, rather than a pure resemblance of what Satan is believed to be. In the sexually driven relationship between Ambrosio and Matilda, Matilda notices a change in the behaviour of the monk. Ambrosio has fallen deeper into the drive of his wandering mind, and "[...] since he considered as importunities the pains which she took to please him, and was disgusted by the very means which she used to recall the wanderer [...]"<sup>157</sup>, the change in the relationship between Ambrosio and Matilda is noticeable, there is a play between the character of who is to control the wandering mind of Ambrosio, as Lewis's protagonist is jumping between the state of giving in to the desires of his wandering mind, and being the conscious, virtuous Monk that he once were in the belief of being.

Ambrosio's final encounter with his wandering mind is of a different character, then his preceding wandering events. His unconscious mind-wandering previously have been dominated by his internal desires, that of sexual desire and vanity. At this point in the narrative Ambrosio is situated in the house of Antonia and Elvira. The instance of this instance of Ambrosio's mind wandering happens after he has committed various escalating events of sin. He has been a sinner of vanity, of desire and of murder. After killing his mother Elvira, Ambrosio was not aware that she was his mother at the time, he finds himself in a chair in the same house he committed the crime. The desire of Ambrosio's wandering mind at this point is highly influenced by the satanic Matilda, in his pursuit of depriving Antonia of her virtue, the virtue that he lost not by his own wishes.

"Ambrosio took down a volume, and seated himself by the table: but his attention wandered from the pages before him. Antonia's image, and that of the murdered Elvira, persisted to force themselves before his imagination."<sup>158</sup>,

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<sup>157</sup> Lewis, p. 203.

<sup>158</sup> Lewis, p. 290.

his attention “wanders” to the crimes he has committed and experienced. Ambrosio feels hunted by his sinful decisions that was made under the seduction of Matilda, at the same time his desire for Antonia is so strong that it is overpowering in the battle going on in his mind. Where the one side is strongly suggested and influenced by Matilda. Ambrosio is only able to be situated in the situation he finds himself in, due to the assistance of Matilda.

In the case of Dacre’s narrative, Victoria’s wandering mind escalates and the instances of mind wandering happens more frequently as her narrative progresses. The sudden escalation of mind wandering happens after her acquaintance with Zofloya. The escalation of Victoria’s state of unconsciousness is beneficial to the satanic Zofloya, he takes advantage of the opportunity of Victoria’s lucid dreaming, and uses them to develop and establish a stronger relationship.

Scarcely had her head reclined upon her pillow, ere the image of Zofloya swam in her sight; she slumbered, and he haunted her dreams; sometimes she wandered with him over beds of flowers, sometimes over craggy rocks, sometimes in fields of the brightest verdure, sometimes over burning sands, tottering on the ridge of some huge precipice, while the angry waters waved in the abyss below<sup>159</sup>,

Zofloya takes Victoria on journeys through her dreams, the first arrangement between the two characters takes place in one of Victoria’s dreams, where she is shown a marriage between Henriquez and Lilla. This dream function as foreshadowing of what is to come of the characters surrounding Victoria, where she and Zofloya are the only one left alive, as well as a sort of contract is being made between the two, where Zofloya ask her about her desire to fulfilling her wishes. A satanic marriage is agreed upon by the two characters, in Victoria’s unconscious state, where she is steered and heavily influenced by Zofloya. Except for the

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<sup>159</sup> Dacre, p. 143.



exceptionally lucid state Victoria finds herself in in her dreams, she frequently access the abilities of her wandering mind.

“For this once, though Henriquez was in her mind and in her soul, another occupied her attention, [...]. To relieve herself from an indefinable oppression, she soon rose from the table, and wandered into the garden: there, throwing herself on a seat, she began to brood over her criminal passion, and the wildest thoughts rioted for pre-eminence in her brain.”<sup>160</sup>,

already before Zofloya suggests that Victoria is to poison Berenza, she daydreams, and lets her mind wander towards her desires of getting rid of Berenza. Everything that Zofloya as Satan offer Victoria, has its origin from Victoria’s mind, this indicates that the protagonists is haunted by the “tormented shadow”<sup>161</sup>, in this case Zofloya, that access the unconscious wandering state of her mind. In Victoria’s awaken state, Zofloya enables the deepest desires of Victoria to happen in her narrative. Zofloya as the “tormented shadow”<sup>162</sup> of Victoria’s mind is contradictory, as the concept enables him to influence and roam the wandering mind, so it is ambiguous if the desires is actually Victoria’s desires or if there planted by Zofloya in his pursuit to make Victoria his. A wandering mind at the time is seen as a bad thing for women to entertain themselves with, but Victoria at the later part of her narratives finds comfort in her awake wandering mind, “She endeavoured to collect her wandering thoughts, but instead of this, an unconquerable lassitude crept over her, accompanied by a disposition to sleep.”<sup>163</sup>, whenever she falls asleep function as a means for the satanic Zofloya to communicate and establish ideas to Victoria’s mind.

“In vain she tried to shake it off, the influence became resistless – her eyelids involuntarily closed, and she was compelled to yield to a power superior to her

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<sup>160</sup> Dacre, p. 146.

<sup>161</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

<sup>162</sup> Baillie, p. 99.

<sup>163</sup> Dacre, p. 227.

will.”<sup>164</sup>,

Zolfoya inherit the satanic power of magic, and frequently uses this to make Victoria fall asleep. Towards the end of Zolfoya and Victoria’s journey he enables this power to plant the fear of The Inquisition in Victoria’s mind, and make her afraid of being discovered of the murder of Berenza and blamed for Henriquez death. Following when she is asleep, she has a dream about the deaths she has caused, and their skeletons, Victoria dreams of being chased by the castles servants. The dreams is ambiguous and both serves as a foreshadowing of what is to happen, when the servants discover the dead bodies in the castle, and is a visual display to make Victoria afraid of her future, guiding her in the direction of Zolfoya, the only person left among her acquaintances, and to whom she has entrusted her sinful ventures. Even though Zolfoya is a especially suspicious character, Victoria does not manage to uncover this and blames her mother for all the wrong choices she has made.

‘Twas thy example too, which caused me to deem lightly of the marriage vow. – Thy heart wandered from its allegiance to thy husband, my heart wandered from mine. – Thy husband died through means of thee, - mine died by poison, which I administered [...]’<sup>165</sup>,

by her mother’s example Victoria claims that she did not had an adequate upbringing to become a proper woman. In some aspects, Victoria is right to blame her mother. Wollstonecraft argues that daughters imitates<sup>166</sup> their mothers, and since Victoria’s mother was the first flawed unnatural female driven by the “desire to please”<sup>167</sup> in Dacre’s story, Victoria would be a character that would be especially prone to the seduction of a wandering mind.

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<sup>164</sup> Dacre, p. 228.

<sup>165</sup> Dacre, p. 246.

<sup>166</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 43.

<sup>167</sup> Wollstonecraft, p. 22.

### 3.2 Physical wandering

Immediately when Ambrosio and Antonia meets, he is struck by her “heavenly”<sup>168</sup> beauty and demeanour, as well as her melodious voice. The monk is struck by a passionate feeling, one that can only be described as unrequited love or passion. Antonia is in need of a house visit from a confessor to pray for her mother who has fallen ill. “[...]Antonia’s empire over him was already too much decided to permit his making a long resistance to the idea which struck him”<sup>169</sup>, Ambrosio who has never left the monastery since he was left there as a baby feels impelled to make the house visit to Antonia’s mother himself to see Antonia again. This is striking for the narrator’s character as he has been very serious about his monastic life, and had made a vow to never venture outside of the monastery walls. There is a significant change in Ambrosio’s character from before he is seduced by the demonic Matilda and succumbs to one of his deepest desires, which goes against the life that he has chosen to live. In the meeting with Antonia another desire of Ambrosio starts to surface. His motivation for breaking his vow, is a quest to get a glimpse of the women he is struck in love with. Even though his sudden need to venture is seeded by Matilda, she “was the only person who vigilance he dreaded”<sup>170</sup>, the monk is oblivious to the powers of Matilda, but still feels that she has a power to know what he is planning, and is afraid of the jealousy that she might experience if she were to find out that he is pursuing another woman.

Matilda who is frequently by Ambrosio’s side has not been present for the entire scene, leading on the narrator to explore his desire to venture on the quest outside the monastery. Ambrosio’s first venture outside the monastery turns out to be unrealistically unproblematic, “[...] he ventured to quit the abbey by a private door, the key of which was in his possession.”<sup>171</sup>, walks the short stroll to Antonia’s apartment without being discovered by anyone, even Matilda seems to be oblivious to his absence. The monk has for the first time

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<sup>168</sup> Lewis, p. 207.

<sup>169</sup> Lewis, p. 210.

<sup>170</sup> Lewis, p. 210.

<sup>171</sup> Lewis, p. 210.

“Broken his vow never to see the outside of the abbey-walls.”<sup>172</sup>, and continue to break this vow for seven days in a row. His passion for Antonia grows, and as a monk who has never been exposed to his desires, his patience is being tested when their relationship does not progress as desired. Matilda’s satanic influence over the narrative of Ambrosio, has him embarking on a journey outside of his known world can indicate that Ambrosio’s journey is driven by satanic influence. Ambrosio is walking away from his monastic life and eternal salvation step by step.

In Victoria’s narrative she encounters physical wandering significantly two times, the first time is when she fled from her mother Laurina and Count Ardolph where she is captivated. This happens before she meets Zofloya, and is influenced by Satan. Her first encounter with physical wandering, is similar to the concept of Ingrid Horrocks’ niche theory on *female wandering*. Females as wanderers differ from men’s wandering, when talking about the action of being in motion men’s wandering is often referred to as traveling or a sort of journey. Men sought out to explore and travel, with an aim to their journey. Female wandering during the Romantic period is similar to that of Satanic wandering, as it is often driven by the sense of homelessness. According to the patriarchal gender norms, women belonged in the household, and by this her wandering was motivated by the fact that she would not have a sense of home.<sup>173</sup> Victoria’s first experience with wandering, happens when she escapes from her captive state at her mother and Ardolphs residence, to seek out the man she sees as a potential husband, her first wandering is similar to the concept of the *wandering knight* searching for a wife. With Dacre making the character Victoria go on this journey, she insinuates the ambiguity of the character’s gender, just like Lewis, Victoria is early in the novel given what was considered masculine traits at the time, making her unfemale. These traits grow as her encounter with Zofloya develops. On her journey from her mother’s house in Catau, Victoria faces some obstacles on her way “Victoria, who had walked, or rather ran, with the utmost celerity, from the moment that she beheld Catau no longer, had hoped in a short time to have penetrated the woods; she, however, found herself mistaken, for the woods was of extensive dimensions; and, ignorant of

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<sup>172</sup> Lewis, p. 210.

<sup>173</sup> Horrocks, pp. 1-4.

its windings, she had not taken the shortest way to emerge from it.”<sup>174</sup>, Victoria is wandering with no sense of direction, she do not know where she is going. Even though she faces obstacles on her way, in that she do not know the direction where she is headed, and seems to wander in circles without getting anywhere, “she continued with unabated eagerness, night, to her confusion, began to draw in, and still she was wandering in its mazes. As it grew darker, the necessity of abstaining from her journey became evident.”<sup>175</sup>, Victoria even though certain when she left the perimeters of her safe sphere now seems to question her wandering, and why she left in the first place, Victoria at first seems insecure about her decision to become a wanderer.

“She no sooner opened her eyes, than, starting upon her feet, she again commenced her journey with the utmost speed.”<sup>176</sup>, the day after she escape her mother and Ardolph, she is more confident about her journey, she continue in a rapid tempo, to not get discovered. Even though her first journey is mostly walked with confidence, whenever she meets an obstacle on the road, Victoria seems to lose her courage “‘Oh!’ she cried, ‘how deeply must I have wandered! – on this melancholy canal no gondola, most likely, ever passes! To retrace my steps would be certain destruction to my hopes – here, then, may I as well remain, and die!’”<sup>177</sup>, when she reaches the water, she assumes that no gondola ever cross the path that she’s on at immediately gives up all her courage.

After engaging in the satanic relationship with Zofloya, the characteristics of her wandering shifts. Her behaviour towards wandering shifts. The first physical journey the two of them conduct together, is when the whole household of Berenza in Venice takes the journey to his castle in the Apennines. Encouraged by Zofloya, Victoria is the encourager of the repositioning of the household, as it would enable her to poison her husband. “Victoria

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<sup>174</sup> Dacre, p. 60.

<sup>175</sup> Dacre, p. 60.

<sup>176</sup> Dacre, p. 61.

<sup>177</sup> Dacre, pp. 61-62.

had administered to the Conte the last atom of the poison; she therefor, as evening came on, wandered forth, in hopes of encountering the Moor, with whom, since her arrival at Torre Alto, she had scarcely found an opportunity of conversing.”<sup>178</sup>, Victoria’s wandering develops, she has by this point in the narrative been acquaintance with Zofloya for some time, and her confidence is growing, as her wandering in search of Zofloya to receive the final part of the poison. Victoria is a wanderer on a mission. The mission to encounter Zofloya. ““your movements have already outstepped my directions, and your precipitancy has gone near to defeat your views [...]”<sup>179</sup>,

### 3.3 Immoral wandering

After Matilda discovers Ambrosio’s frequent ventures outside the monastery, there is a change to his wandering. While his first tour outside the walls of the church were motivated by romantic means, in his pursuit to be closer to Antonia, the visits after Matilda finds out is of a more vicious character. She influences Ambrosio to attend his suppressed desires, and instead of just getting closer to Antonia, the motive of his future walks outside the monastery is now motivated by a criminal satanic character, with the goal of inflicting Antonia his equivalently virtuous and sheltered, virgin, and his double, what Matilda inflicted on him, by seducing him and give him access to his deepest desires.

In all of Ambrosio’s ventures he walks alone, and this is the case for his following walk after the Black Mass. Ambrosio aided by Satan with a silver myrtle, now attains the ability to enter any door he might desire. While his previous walks to Antonia’s house were timed during the siesta, “It was almost two o’clock before the lustful monk ventured to bend his step towards Antonia’s dwelling.”<sup>180</sup>, the walk he takes this time is of a different character

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<sup>178</sup> Dacre, p. 166.

<sup>179</sup> Dacre, p. 166.

<sup>180</sup> Lewis, p. 258.

than his previous walks, as it is set during the night. Even though under the influence of satanic decisions, the monk do hesitate in going through with this walking that he summoned Satan for help, “The result of the monk’s deliberations was, that he should proceed in his enterprise.”<sup>181</sup>, even with his mobility were Satan is not present in the moment, and Matilda is not there to constantly convince and seduce the monk to make bad choices, Ambrosio make these choices by himself. Even though he is aware that he is influenced by satanic seduction. The wandering after he teamed up with Satan to achieve his desires, the wandering takes a different character, “No sooner did he touch the door with the silver myrtle, than it flew open, and presented him with a free passage.”<sup>182</sup>, with the help of Satan, Ambrosio experiences no obstacles in his pursuit of raping Antonia, the path is laid bare for him to proceed into her house. He is even guided by “the moon-beams” <sup>183</sup>. Although Ambrosio is guided by Satan in his nightly mission to Antonia’s house, her mother Elvira, which it later turns out is actually Ambrosio’s mother as well, function as a force of good in this scene with has a strong evil influence. She discovers Ambrosio, and tries to stop him, in a fight between good and evil, Ambrosio with satanic influence on his side, ends up killing his mother. His journey from the crime scene he’s made is not as joyful as his journey to the house, “Bewildered by fear, he fancied that his flight was opposed by legions of phantoms. Wherever he turned, the disfigured corpse seemed to lie in his passage, and it was long before he succeeded in reaching the door.”<sup>184</sup>, Elvira, even though she just died function as an obstacle on his journey from the upstairs bedroom. What is usually seen as a good power, a good Christian woman, who just died, is the obstacle for Ambrosio’s journey from the house. This makes the monk aware of the power of the crime he’s just committed, and Ambrosio is worried about this sin. In the midst of his worries, and struggles of fleeing the crime scene, “The enchanted myrtle produced its former effect. The door opened, and he hastened down the stair-case. He entered the abbey unobserved [...]”<sup>185</sup>, the myrtle which he got from Satan starts to work again, and helps Ambrosio fly the crime scene, Satan is his helping hand in need.

Dacre’s narrator Victoria is on a journey where she gradually becomes more violent,

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<sup>181</sup> Lewis, p. 259.

<sup>182</sup> Lewis, p. 259.

<sup>183</sup> Lewis, p. 259.

<sup>184</sup> Lewis, p. 263.

<sup>185</sup> Lewis, p. 263.

brutal and vicious throughout the narrative. Especially after meeting Zofloya, the only physical wandering she did before meeting Satan was as mentioned before, when she left her mother's house. When Victoria went on her first journey she took her first steps down a path of destruction, gradually walking away from the bourgeois thought of the time of what a woman should be. In her and Zofloya's power struggle on who Victoria's narrative belong to, the following walk she takes, she is crossing Zofloya's wishes for her narrative, and claims it as her own. Even though she's already killed Berenza, her husband, and deceived Henriquez which led him to kill himself, the walk Victoria takes to kill Lilla, is a turning point for her as a character. With her wandering to the destroy the incarnation of the sublime portrayal of the patriarchal woman "[...] with beating heart she gained the court, and passed into the forest, hastening onwards to the path described by Zofloya [...]"<sup>186</sup>, Victoria hastens towards her target, she is well aware that the crime she is about to commit is against her mentor Zofloya and at this point her only acquaintance wishes, she is particularly vicious in her journey and as if she knows that Zofloya could easily discover what she is trying to achieve. With the journey she takes control over her own narrative, even though she would never have been able to commit the crime of killing Lilla if she was not influenced by Zofloya, the devil, and his satanic suggestions.

Though never before had she wandered in the light of day so far, she trusted implicitly to the directions of Zofloya, and prepared to ascend the rocky acclivity.<sup>187</sup>.

On her way to the cave where Lilla is being held captive by Zofloya, "[...] Victoria beheld her death-reared visions; - frantic rage fired her soul at the thought, and keen disappointment maddened her brain."<sup>188</sup>, she blames Lilla for the death of Henriquez, the man of her courtly love and obsession. This rage and anger she is feeling, fuels her criminal wandering, and pushes her more in the direction of unfemale characteristics. "Scarce was she herself conscious of the dire purpose that throbbed at her heart – yet her steps were directed towards that fatal spot, where, in hopeless imprisonment, the miserable Lilla still languished."<sup>189</sup>,

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<sup>186</sup> Dacre, p. 202.

<sup>187</sup> Dacre, p. 202.

<sup>188</sup> Dacre, p. 222.

<sup>189</sup> Dacre, p. 222.



Victoria is on a mission, to punish Lilla who is everything that she is not. With this Dacre makes the narrator Victoria a representation in Victoria of everything that a women should not be. Victoria's walk towards her victim is influenced and characterised by "hellish strength"<sup>190</sup> and "instinctive rage and terrible despair"<sup>191</sup>, even though the walk towards Lilla is of Victoria's own desire, and not something suggested by the satanic Zofloya. Victoria is actually crossing Zofloya's wishes, he wants Lilla to live, the scene is set up by Satan, Lilla in the cave is a temptation for Victoria, and when everything she desires cease to exist, the only feeling she is left with is rage and despair. By Victoria killing Lilla, is beneficial for Zofloya in his mission to make Victoria a possession of his Satanic desire.

"At length she beheld herself where instinctive rage and terrible despair had led her. Till this moment, never had she visited the defenceless object of her hate and vengeance; indifferent to her state, whether of death or long-protracted torment, [...]"<sup>192</sup>,

Victoria has realised that she is not in control over her own narrative, as she obliviously had believed she was since she escaped the estate in Catu. The immoral wandering that Victoria engage in, is a result of the conflict of the power struggle between her and Zofloya, where she desires to be in control of her own narrative, while without her knowledge she discovers that Zofloya has great control of her narrative, as discussed in chapter 2.

### **3.4 Conclusion wandering**

In this chapter we have explored the satanic wandering, and the influence of this wandering on the protagonists of Lewis and Dacre. The most important form of satanic wandering manifests itself in the two protagonists through the wandering of the mind. Satan has access to the protagonists unconscious mind, through them being flawed characters, and this makes the protagonists easier targets of satanic influence. Though the control that Satan empowers through the characters wandering mind enables him to nurture their deepest desires, and send

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<sup>190</sup> Dacre, p. 222.

<sup>191</sup> Dacre, p. 222.

<sup>192</sup> Dacre, p. 222.

them down on a path of gaining this. The differences between the protagonists of Lewis and Dacre, is that Victoria is already flawed from childhood, even though the satanic influence immensify this she is oblivious to the crimes she is victim of. While the Monk of Lewis, victimises himself, by suppressing his masculine characteristics, and by constraining from all worldly aspects of pleasure. Ultimately, both Victoria and Ambrosio is flawed characters from before they engage with Satan, this makes both of them prone to satanic influence.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

The progress of vice is gradual and imperceptible, and the arch enemy ever waits to take advantage of the failings of mankind.

(Dacre, p. 268.)

This thesis has critically analysed the relationships between the protagonists Victoria's and Ambrosio's relationship with Satan and the satanic powers in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*, by focusing on romance and wandering. This study explores the characterization of what a satanic relationship is, and how this is expressed in regards of the relation to the protagonists of these novels. In addition, the thesis explores how the satanic relationships impacts the protagonists engaging in the relationship. By addressing the ambiguity of Satan as a literary character, we see how the relationships encountered with the novels protagonists is expressed in terms of the patriarchal societal norms of gender and race, with Satan as a transgressor.

In chapter two, we learned that in the portrayal of Satan in Dacre's novel *Zofloya, or the Moor*, is portrayed as a romantic suitor of the protagonist Victoria. The Satanic approach in the pursuit of a romantic relationship in Dacre's novel is similar to the concept of unrequited love. Satan appears to be in love with the protagonists, who does not reciprocate the alleged feelings at play. Dacre's portrayal of Satan is ambiguous, she does not follow the historical characterisation of Satan as an arrogant driven by lust without means, Satan portrays in his pursuit of Victoria to be romantically invested in her character. The ambiguity of the character is displayed by his transgression between the characterisation of the character, between being a loving romantic suitor and a manipulative Satan, with a ploy to seduce Victoria to eternal damnation. The ambiguous part about Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* is both in the portrayal of the relationship between the two characters, and not being certain if Zofloya is the unrequited suitor or having a motive of a darker deed.

The portrayal of the satanic Matilda, the demon who substitute for the actual character of Satan, for most part of Lewis's novel. Matilda from the start has traits of being a satanic seducer, she persistently advocates for the monk Ambrosio to engage deeper with his desire, and assists the Monk in his pursuit to commit crimes. Ambrosio who has lived a suppressed life as a chaste Monk almost immediately falls for the charms of Matilda, and lose all sense of self control constantly craving more than what the satanic Matilda can offer.

In contrast to Dacre's Satan which is ambiguous up until the very last page, Lewis's Satan is not ambiguous at all, both the character Satan and his "helper" Matilda is set characters who does not have a character development, and they both operate within the creative framework of what the character Satan should be. The ambiguous part of Lewis's satanic interpretation, is the perception of gender roles, and how gender is perceived in the novel. With transgression between the characters, both Matilda's and Ambrosio's actual gender and the gender they portray. The gender role between the satanic seducer and the seduced Ambrosio fluctuates throughout the novel.

In chapter three, we explored the concept of satanic wandering further through the movement of Dacre's and Lewis' protagonists Victoria and Ambrosio. The main finding of the chapter is seen in the concept of the wandering mind, a state where the protagonists enter a state of failure of their cognitive control, and their minds starts to drift. Satan possess the ability to enter the unconscious mind, and since the wandering mind is a sort of unconscious state, Satan has the opportunity to enter the protagonists mind, influencing their course of action. In both Lewis' and Dacre's novels the satanic wandering is mainly expressed as the wandering mind, the immoral wandering the protagonist takes part in, is a result of the satanic influence gained through the romantic relationship of the characters as well as the ability of Satan to access the protagonists mind. The similarities between wandering and the narratives of both Dacre's and Lewis' protagonists is also present in the significance of satanic wandering in the paths of the two protagonists Ambrosio and Victoria, the effect of satanic wandering takes the protagonists on an immoral wandering through their deepest desires.

The Monk Ambrosio ventures on a journey to take back the virtue that the satanic Matilda derived him from. The satanic Matilda seduced Ambrosio to give in to his desire, and with this lost his virtue and virginity, the pain that was afflicted on him by Lewis' Satan, is

what he aims to do with Antonia, the equivalently virtuous and sheltered double. Dacre's protagonists path leads down an equivalent horrid road as that of Ambrosio, but with a different motive.

The seduction of the satanic Zofloya, sends Victoria down the path towards her becoming unfemale, the journey to this achievement is stacked with the dead bodies of Berenza, Henriques and Lilla, unlike Ambrosio from Lewis' novel the sinful path she ventures on is not motivated by her taking back what was hers before the satanic influence. Victoria is to some extent content with being unfemale, her ultimate desire of Victoria at the end is to live.

Regarding the concept of the satanic seduction within the theme of satanic wandering, both the protagonist of Lewis and Dacre is flawed in some way before they encounter Satan and the satanic relationship is initiated. Ambrosio's flaw from before the Satanic encounter is through the wandering mine and on the subject of vanity, the Monk indulge in self-admiration of his work as an abbot and his popularity in all of Madrid. Dacre's character Victoria inherits her flawed character from her mother, in accordance with Wollstonecraft Dacre displays how the lack of a good education in the childhood and a present mother, leads to women becoming unsexed. The initial flaw of Victoria's character is that she has tendencies of a wandering mind, the wandering mind where Zofloya first starts his acquaintance with the character Victoria.

To summarize the main points of this thesis argument, in Dacre's novel Satan disguised as Zofloya, initiates a romantic relationship with the protagonist Victoria, this relationship is read as a relationship of romantic sort. The relationships effect for the protagonist Victoria, is that her relationship with Zofloya enables her to pursue her romantic interest in Henriquez, Zofloya is the enabler of Victoria's pursuit. At the same time, in a play of the power for Victoria's narrative, Satans positions himself in a manner that allows him to be the last man standing of Victoria' acquaintances. The satanic wandering in *Zofloya, or the Moor* is through the already flawed Victoria's wandering mind, and the satanic influence sets her out for a path towards hell.

In Lewis' novel Satan is present in Matilda, she initiates a romantic relationship with the Monk. The relationship effect the protagonist, in surfacing his suppressed desires, he satanic

relationship enables Ambrosio to pursue his desire for Antonia. The satanic wandering in *The Monk* happens through the already flawed Ambrosio's wandering mind, Satan's access to his mind is through the sexual relationship established ahead of the wandering taking place in the narrative. The satanic influence regarding Ambrosio's wandering mind, just like in Dacre's novel sets him out for a path towards hell.

Satan as a literary character pursues the flawed human beings of mankind.

My initial thought when starting the production was to compare the characteristics of Satan in two novels from the Romantic period and compare them with two contemporary novels, to see what the elements that build the character of our times Satan, but which due to time and space limitations did not allow. In this potential topic it could have been interesting to focus on the creativity of the character, as there is no set recipe of how to creatively unfold Satan as a character. Even though there is a cultural heritage to the character, it is up to the writer to explore the Satan of their literary work.

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