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Teach Them to Interpret: Educating Female Children in the Works of Sarah Fielding, Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood from 1749-1820

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the representation of education of girls in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, particularly from 1749 to 1820. It aims at exploring the importance of critical interpretation in education and developing girls' interpretative skills for the acquisition of virtues. In the process the girls develop either intellectually, through a study of certain non-religious books approved by their instructors, or morally, as a result of their teachers' decision to incorporate the study of religious books in their curriculum. This difference is clearly recognized by the selected authors in their respective texts. Therefore, the primary research objective of this thesis is the exploration of critical interpretation in the education of girls from 1749-1820 and how it results in their intellectual and moral development. Furthermore, the arguments presented by the selected authors on teaching religious books to children directs this research towards investigating different establishments which provided schooling in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century and what teaching methods were adopted by the educators inside those establishments, thus also focusing on the importance of ideal educators and their characteristics. Finally, this thesis addresses the complex question of how religion and education worked as two sides of the same coin during a key period of Britain's history.

Chapter one focuses on the education of women in the first half of the eighteenth century, looking in particular at Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). It argues that girls must be taught to critically interpret every book for moral lessons which also include fairy tales, dramatic plays and poems. Chapter two focuses on the education of women in the second half of the eighteenth century and explores Hannah More's *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799). It shows how More lay emphasis on the development of girls' interpretative skills by teaching them to critically interpret only the Bible. According to More, education must relentlessly focus on inculcating Christian principles in children which

helps us in understanding the influence of Evangelicalism on the education of women. Chapter three discusses the religious revision of Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) by Mary Martha Sherwood in 1820 and elaborates further on the influence of Evangelicalism on early nineteenth-century women's academies in England.

This thesis distinguishes itself and represents how a common educational practice of teaching critical interpretation to children connected different women educationalists of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood emphasize scriptural education and draw a curriculum that primarily includes the study of the Bible along-with other books for a moral development of the girls whereas Sarah Fielding completely rejects teaching religious books to children. These writers prioritize developing girls' interpretative skills which tells how important this educational practice is deemed by the educationalists of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century and how similar are their approaches towards the education of women.

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INTRODUCTION

I. CRITICAL INTERPRETATION: AN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE THAT DEVOLVED FROM BEING GENDER NEUTRAL TO BEING GENDER SPECIFIC

Interpretation, which means understanding the meaning of anything one reads, listens or observes, is an essential term in this thesis and is emphasized by various thinkers of the eighteenth century with respect to the education of children. When we add the word critical to interpretation it further emphasizes that whatever we read, listen or observe must be understood with an even more attention to detail. It is thus a skill which, with constant practice, helps students in gaining knowledge, both moral and practical. However, it must also be noted that it is the teacher's responsibility to teach this skill to students, thus making it an educational practice of improving students' interpretative skills. This educational practice has not only been mentioned but also greatly emphasized by earlier thinkers. Plato termed it the ability to differentiate between the allegorical and the literal, Spinoza termed it the ability to 'distinguish and separate the true idea from other perceptions', John Locke mentioned it as a method which must be used to direct children towards differentiating the good and the bad, and Rousseau, too, called it a 'good method' which helps in nurturing the love for learning in the child.[1] However, this age-old educational practice prescribed for teaching both boys and girls succumbed to patriarchy over time. This serves as a point of entry for this thesis. It reflects a significant new perspective to the history of women's education in England from 1749-1820 by identifying a common teaching practice in the works of selected female writers having contrasting beliefs and circumstances.

In order to better understand how these writers outline a teaching practice which revolves around interpretation it is first necessary to understand how this term (or practice)

[1] These thinkers and their emphasis on developing children's interpretative skills is discussed in detail below.

was employed by thinkers even before it was used by the educationalists of the eighteenth century. Since classical or Greek philosophy played an important role in the education of the three selected female writers I will first present Plato's views on the importance of interpretation in education.[2] This not only helps us in understanding how these female writers accepted Plato's emphasis on enhancing children's interpretative skills but also that the Greek philosopher's views on interpretation greatly influenced other prominent thinkers of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries who are mentioned below.

In *The Republic* (c. 375 BC) Plato writes,

> For a young person cannot judge what is allegorical and what is literal; anything that he receives into his mind at that age is likely to become indelible and unalterable; and therefore it is most important that the tales which the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts.[3]

Not only does Plato mentions that the education received in childhood shapes an individual's character but also makes it clear that that education, for future's sake, must solely depend on learning virtues and morals.[4] Plato's emphasis on interpretation is visible when he writes that a child is incapable of differentiating between 'what is allegorical and what is literal.' A child has immature interpretative skills as a result of which he believes whatever he reads, be it a fairy tale or an historical account. Thus, the task of developing and enhancing the child's interpretative skills falls upon his teachers because, according to Plato, the ideas or

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[2] Penelope Wilson explains in chapter one of this thesis how Sarah Fielding learnt the Greek language and read Xenophon's *Memorabilia* and other Greek authors under the mentorship of Arthur Collier, William Young and James Harris in the 1740s. 'Sarah Fielding, Trans., Xenophon's Memorabilia and The Apology of Socrates', *XVII-XVIII*, 74 (2017), pp. XVII-VIII; Sarah Fielding read Epictetus through Elizabeth Carter's translation of Arrian's *Discourses of Epictetus and Encheiridion*. Carter worked on the translation from 1748 to 1757 to help Catherine Talbot overcome the death of Elizabeth Secker. Therefore, Fielding read Greek literature before writing *The Governess*. Timothy Dykstal writes, 'Among Sarah Fielding's works, too, was a translation of the classical writer Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* (1762), a work that she probably undertook after noting the success of Carter's translation (which sold more than 1000 copies by subscription and which she too found appealing for its pointed style and home truths.' 'Provoking the Ancients: Classical Learning and Imitation in Fielding and Collier', *College Literature*, 31 (2004), pp. 102-22.

[3] Plato, *The Republic,* ed. by Benjamin Jowett, (Auckland: Floating Press, 2009), p. 75.

[4] According to Plato, 'the beginning is the most important part of any work, especially in the case of a young and tender thing; for that is the time at which the character is formed and the desired impression is more readily taken.' Ibid, p. 73.

knowledge he gains during childhood will remain 'indelible and unalterable' throughout his life which makes it even more necessary for his teachers to improve his interpretative skills. It is not to be missed that Plato also lays emphasis on the role played by the teacher in a student's life. A good teacher must provide correct interpretations of books (fictional or non-fictional) to children in order for them to understand and develop their own interpretative skills to differentiate between the allegorical and the literal.[5] Therefore, for Plato interpretation plays an important role in the lives of both the student and the teacher. The teacher must teach by example and focus on enhancing the child's interpretative skills by teaching him to identify virtues and morals in any book that he reads.

The generations of thinkers and philosophers leading up to the eighteenth century who adhere to Plato's ideals on interpretation are numerous and the views of all cannot be taken into account, thus, after Plato I present how Baruch Spinoza from the seventeenth century lays emphasis on this important aspect of children's education. I choose Spinoza because not only does he talks about a teaching method but also because that teaching method is similar to the one outlined by the three selected female writers in this thesis. He writes in *Ethics* (1677) that 'that will be the good method which shows in what manner the mind must be directed according to the standard of a given true idea.'[6] Spinoza points out that the child must be guided towards learning virtues and morals because, according to him, they contain the true essence ('idea') of a good life and that a good teacher is one who adopts this method in his teachings. Spinoza writes further that 'the method will be more perfect as the mind understands more things' which makes it clearer to us that in order to become virtuous and moral we must learn from various sources. The idea of interpretation exists in this method

[5] In Book VII of *The Republic* Plato explains that children must be taught 'the greatest skill of asking and answering questions' or the skill of 'dialectic' which focuses on investigating, discussing or interpreting the truth behind anything, which will further help students in differentiating between the allegorical and the literal. Ibid, p. 276.

[6] Benedictus De Spinoza, *Ethics,* trans. by Andrew Boyle, (London: Heron Books), p. 238.

pointed out by Spinoza. In order to clearly present this method of education he divides it into two stages the first of which lays emphasis on interpretation.

Spinoza writes, 'the first part of our method, which is, as I said, to distinguish and separate the true idea from other perceptions and to restrain the mind lest it confuse false, feigned, and doubtful ideas with true ones.'[7] Spinoza explains that it is necessary to properly interpret a writer's words for their true meanings. He terms works of fiction as feigned writings and warns his readers that they must be critically interpreted for virtues and morals which are left as a subtext by writers of fiction. When Spinoza asks to 'distinguish and separate the true idea from other perceptions' it is then that his emphasis on critical interpretation comes to light. His stress on distinguishing true and feigned ideas reminds us of Plato's stress on distinguishing the allegorical and the literal. A proper interpretation of the text one reads is the point that bridges the ideals of Plato and Spinoza on the education of children. Spinoza further explains the importance of interpretation when he writes,

> The mind when it pays attention to a fictitious thing and one false to its nature, so as to turn it over in its mind and understand it, and to deduce in proper order from it such things as are to be deduced, will easily make manifest its falsity.[8]

Spinoza explains that when properly interpreted every reader becomes capable of understanding the true meaning behind any fictional story. However, it is necessary that we pay utmost attention when reading and that we have good interpretative skills. The way to develop interpretative skills is mentioned by Spinoza when he explains that the understanding develops over time when we read from various sources. Furthermore, for Spinoza understanding is not merely a matter of reading the entire story and finding a good moral at the end of it, instead it is about critically interpreting each part of the story separately and

[7] Ibid, p. 242.
[8] Ibid, p. 246.

arriving at a combined moralistic conclusion at the end.[9] The second part of Spinoza's educational method deepens his emphasis on interpretation further as he writes, 'the principal rule of this part, as follows from the first part, is to regard closely all ideas which we find in us through pure understanding, so that we may distinguish them from those which we imagine.'[10] The first part of the method focuses on proper interpretation of the books and the second part focuses on distinguishing and identifying moral lessons within those books. Thus, critical interpretation of the books is necessary for the acquisition of virtues and morals and is clearly highlighted by Spinoza in his method of education.

Another great thinker from the seventeenth century who highly influenced the three female writers in this thesis and their emphasis on interpretation in education was John Locke. Locke's ideals on the proper education of children which includes not only his views on a good teacher but also a good teaching method are scattered throughout in his *Thoughts on Education* (1693). He starts by explaining that the minds of children are easily swayed in any direction as a result of which it is necessary to instil good morals and to point them in the direction which leads to the acquisition of virtues.[11] The teaching method, according to Locke, must focus not only on the mind of a child but also his body and therefore, it is not only a balanced diet that is necessary but also a balanced education that will provide him with valuable life lessons. Books, according to Locke, are necessary but teaching the child to interpret the actions and behaviour of the people around him contributes primarily towards his intellectual growth. He writes,

> Virtues and vices can by no words be so plainly set before their understandings, as the actions of other men will show them, when you direct their observation, and bid them view this or that

[9] He writes, 'if a thing that is composed of many parts is divided in thought into its simplest parts, and each part is regarded in itself, all confusion will vanish.' Ibid, p. 247.
[10] Ibid, p. 257.
[11] Postulate two states that 'I imagine the minds of children, as easily turned, this or that way, as water itself; and though this be the principal part, our main care should be about the inside.' John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education,* ed. by John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 7.

> good or bad quality in their practice […] This is a method to be used, not only whilst they are young; but to be continued, even as long as they shall be under another's tuition or conduct.[12]

Locke's emphasis on interpretation is visible in these lines when he asks the teacher or the parent to direct the child into observing 'this or that good or bad quality' in a person as a result of which he will develop the interpretative skills of distinguishing the good from the bad or the virtuous from the vicious. He explains further that this method of education must continue irrespective of the child's age in order for him to have a successful life. The child must be taught to critically interpret or identify virtuous actions because, according to Locke, it 'is the hard and valuable part to be aimed at in education'.[13] Thus, the role of a teacher who understands not only this method but also the importance of teaching virtues to children is, according to Locke, an ideal teacher.[14]

In addition to teaching interpretation to children Locke's method of education also lays emphasis on order and constancy. He argues that the child must be taught the right thing from the right sources at the right time and in the right manner.

> Order and constancy are said to make the great difference between one man and another; this I am sure, nothing so much clears a learner's way, helps him so much on in it, and makes him go so easy and so far in an inquiry, as a good method. His governor should take pains to make him sensible of this, accustom him to order, and teach him method in all the applications of his thought; show him wherein it lies and the advantages of it; acquaint him with the several sorts of it, either from general to particulars, or from particulars to what is more general.[15]

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[12] Ibid, p. 45.
[13] Ibid, p. 38.
[14] It is important for such a teacher to be able to understand people's natures in order to direct his students into studying them. Furthermore, the teacher, according to Locke, must also understand that every child has his own genius and thus he should be taught in a manner that enhances that genius or skill rather than imposing a new type of talent upon him. Read *Thoughts on Education,* p. 31 for further requisites, according to Locke, of a good teacher.
[15] Ibid, p. 115.

These lines help us understand how important it is for a teacher to enhance his students' interpretative skills and how important it is for the students to learn in an orderly way. If a child is taught systematically then it not only increases his pace of learning and understanding things but also helps in any 'inquiry' he wishes to undertake. Locke substitutes the word reason with inquiry and thus learning in an orderly fashion enhances the reasoning skills of a child as is understood from these lines. The teacher must instil this process of learning into the child's mind so that he becomes habitual in using this method in every phase of his life.[16] Thus, as Locke argues, the teaching method must involve an order and constancy and whatever order is chosen by the teacher it will produce its corresponding results as we shall see through the works of Fielding, More and Sherwood in this thesis.

When it comes to exploring pedagogical discourses from the eighteenth century it is impossible to ignore Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Emile* (1762) which, writes Jules Steeg, 'was in its day a kind of gospel'.[17] To mention the writer here is not only necessary for understanding his ideals on education and interpretation but also for understanding the criticism he received from eighteenth-century female educationalists, especially Hannah More. In *Emile* Rousseau draws a plan for the proper education of a child, the ultimate aim of which 'is not to teach him knowledge, but to give him a love for it, and a good method of acquiring it when the love has grown stronger.'[18] According to Rousseau, the child must be directed towards developing a love or interest for the subject in order to ease his learning and enhance his understanding. When this love or interest for a subject, continues Rousseau, is fully acknowledged a proper method of teaching must be incorporated by the teacher. The

[16] This further helps us in understanding why Fielding, More and Sherwood choose different books to teach to children. The difference lies in the order those books are to be taught. The study of other books takes precedence for Fielding over the study of the Bible whereas the study of the Bible takes precedence for More and Sherwood over the study of other books.
[17] Rousseau, *Emile; or Concerning Education,* translated by Barbara Foxley, (Read Books Ltd., 2007), p. 1.
[18] Ibid*,* p. 131.

proper teaching method, according to Rousseau, varies with the child's age as a result of which he divides *Emile* into five parts.[19] It is in parts two and three of the book that his emphasis on interpretation in education is brought to light. He writes,

> An image may exist alone in the mind that represents it, but every idea supposes other ideas. When we imagine, we only see; when we conceive of things, we compare them. Our sensations are entirely passive, whereas all our perceptions or ideas spring from an active principle which judges. I say then that children, incapable of judging, really have no memory.[20]

Rousseau explains that when we see an object its image is formed in our mind but the ability to relate that image with another is the true power of our memory. However, decision ('judging') making skill is the key, states Rousseau, to this process and the child only develops this skill when he has properly understood and interpreted the object or the image in front of him. Books alone are not the only source for the development of interpretative skills; understanding objects and images, too, serve the same purpose. He considers the development of interpretative skills as the development of judgemental skills which can be achieved not only by perusing different books but also by relating different objects and their images together. For Rousseau good judgemental skills help in understanding and linking different ideas together, and a child who has weak judgemental skills, according to him, has a weak memory. Therefore, it is necessary for a teacher to focus on enhancing this (interpretative) skill in a child.

It is of utmost importance that the teacher critically interprets the words for their hidden meanings because a child, according to Rousseau, 'need assistance' in acquiring

[19] Part one talks about the education of a child from the time of his birth until he is five years old and lays emphasis on how it is dependent on men, nature and circumstances. Part two, for age five to twelve, explains how parents or teachers must provide to the child what is necessary and not what the child demands and in so doing he must be taught the difference between virtue and vice. Part three, for age twelve to fifteen, lays emphasis on teaching the child through actions and not words, and warns parents or teachers not to impose their own ideals on the child for his virtuous development.

[20] Ibid, pp. 78-9.

knowledge.[21] Rousseau's emphasis on interpretation becomes clear when he writes that 'in any study, words that represent things are nothing without the idea of the things they represent. We, however, limit children to these signs, without ever being able to make them understand the things represented.'[22] He points out that every word is associated with an idea and it is necessary that children be taught to understand that idea through proper interpretation of the word.[23] If children are taught to merely memorize words ('signs') without understanding their true meanings it then serves no purpose in adding to their knowledge. However, he also warns the teacher not to be 'always preaching, always moralizing' and 'always acting the pedant' but to give the student room for observations, reflections and committing errors because it is only through self-observations that children learn faster.[24] It is this instruction that makes Rousseau a target for Hannah More's criticism whose ideal teacher in *Strictures* (1799) seizes every opportunity to preach and to moralise.[25] More terms Rousseau's writings as 'metaphysical sophistry' which ensnare the innocent minds of children towards learning vices and errors rather than virtues and principles.[26] However, detailing the rift between these two authors is not the purpose of this introduction and is thus briefly dealt with in chapter two of this thesis.

Having mentioned above the views of Plato, Spinoza, Locke and Rousseau on the education of children one can easily identify and argue that these philosophers talk

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[21] Ibid, p. 12.
[22] Ibid, p. 82.
[23] Rousseau explains this with the example of fairy tales which must be properly interpreted for their moral lessons because children are 'carried away by the fiction' and 'miss the truth conveyed'. The words of a fictional writer are no different than those of a historian if both are not properly interpreted and understood. Ibid, p. 85. This also relates to and helps us in understanding Mrs Teachum's message on fairy tales in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) in chapter one of this thesis.
[24] Ibid, p. 60.
[25] Rousseau's other comments on the teaching method or the characteristics of the teacher also attract criticism but the one related to religion contradicts Hannah More's ideals and is thus important to mention here.
[26] Read pages 32-6 for More's criticism on Rousseau. Hannah More, *Strictures on the modern system of female education, With a view of the principles and conduct prevalent among women of rank and fortune,* Vol. 1 (London: 1799).

specifically on the education of boys and not that of girls. However, a closer inspection allows us to understand that irrespective of Plato arguing the case for the education of both boys and girls equivalently, male philosophers after him have focused so much only on the education of boys in their treatises that the education of girls became an afterthought in the eighteenth century. Plato's *The Republic* outlines an ideal state the existence of which is possible only if every person in it performs his or her duties well. However, even in such a state the formation of a hierarchy or a chain of command is inevitable at the top of which, according to Plato, is the philosopher. When Plato writes that 'until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy' one can easily assume that the philosopher can only be a man ('king') and not a woman, and furthermore conclude that all the recommendations given by Plato on the education of children are in reality for a male child and cannot be used for the education of a female child.[27] However, Plato makes it very clear, not once but twice, that both boys and girls must study the same subjects until their talents employ them otherwise. In book five he writes that 'the gifts of nature are alike diffused in both; all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also', and in book seven he warns Glaucon that 'you must not suppose that what I have been saying applies to men only and not to women as far as their natures can go.'[28] Therefore, Plato does not distinguishes between men and women on grounds of their gender or their intellect to pursue similar literary interests, instead he proposes that both boys and girls should be taught the same books. The gradual deterioration of the position of women in the works of male thinkers from Plato in 375 BC, who clearly stated that there must be no difference in the education of both the sexes, to Spinoza in 1677, who refers to human beings as men alone provides an opportunity to explore not only the rise of woman educationalists in the eighteenth century but also the

[27] Plato, *The Republic,* p. 199.
[28] Ibid, p. 174, 283.

pedagogical aspects in their works.[29] Furthermore, by the time we reach Rousseau in 1762 the references to women and to their education present a completely opposite picture to the ideals of Plato on the same.

According to Rousseau, nature bestowed intellectual superiority on men as a result of which women must submit themselves to men. Irrespective of highlighting the importance of developing in children a desire to learn, Rousseau writes that women must be taught in a restrictive environment. Sophie, Emile's counterpart in *Emile,* must learn to submit to the will of others and live according to the rules set by her husband. The education of Emile must focus on enhancing interpretative skills as we have seen above but the education of Sophie, according to Rousseau, must be limited to learning social manners and etiquettes in order to fulfil the duty of her sex. 'Although Rousseau repeats his plea that we must all "observe constantly the indications of nature", nature seems to have a less significant role in the educational programme and lifestyle he outlines for girls than social control and convention.'[30] Rousseau is adamant on his observation that nature has created men and women differently and therefore their education must be in accordance to their respective natures. Men are intellectually strong and must receive a diverse education (as is the case with Emile) whereas sewing, tailoring and maintaining the house along-with waiting on their husbands are jobs fit for women who must steer clear of intellectual matters. Thus,

[29] Spinoza refers to human beings as only men in his book which describes the position of women in the seventeenth century. The education of children, according to Spinoza, must follow a method which results in the development of their interpretative skills but it is also necessary to understand that Spinoza's two-step teaching method discussed above is not limited to the education of boys alone. Indeed, *Ethics* richly describes Spinoza's views on God and can be considered as T.S. Gregory writes, a 'prayer'. He relates everything to God and it is within this relationship that we understand his views on the intellectual differences between men and women. T.S. Gregory simplifies it in the introduction and writes that, according to Spinoza, 'Men do not own thoughts; they think. They are not furnished with sensations; they feel. The verb not the noun signifies what really happens.'[29] The noun man or woman makes no difference to Spinoza because, according to him, it is their actions (verb) that separate them. Similarly following Spinoza's tautological method in *Ethics* we can conclude that it is not important that boys and girls should study different books, instead it is the teacher's teaching method (two-step interpretation method) that makes all the difference. Spinoza, *Ethics,* p. x, xviii.

[30] *The Enlightenment, Studies* II, ed. by Michael Bartholomew, Denise Hall and Antony Lentin, (Bath: The Bath Press, 1992), p. 206.

Rousseau's emphasis on providing a diverse education to boys and limiting girls to the confines of the household as a result of their separate natures is completely opposite to what Plato prescribes in *Republic.*

A repetitive gender specific reference to human beings as men or to children as boys became a normalcy in the writings of these thinkers to the extent that the topic being discussed (in this case education) was gradually understood to be only for men or for boys. Women were gradually side-lined from the discussion and were left to consider themselves as unequal or unworthy. Consequently, it became necessary for certain women educationalists to raise their voices against such atrocities and present through their writings that the education of women was equally important as the education of men. Therefore, this thesis presents the views of Sarah Fielding, Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood on the education of girls and explores how they are united in enhancing the interpretative skills of girls, an essential academic practice for the education of children highlighted by Plato but which gradually became associated only with the education of boys.

II. MARY ASTELL: THE FIRST WOMAN'S ADVOCATE

Institutions such as Grammar Schools and Girl's Academies were possible providers of education in the final years of the seventeenth century. Grammar Schools focussed on teaching the classical languages to students as a result of which most of the prominent writers of England, men and women, were well versed in Greek and Latin.[31] These schools divided their scholars into 'six classes, namely, accidence, or introduction to Latin, higher Bible, middle Bible, lower Bible, Testament, and spelling classes.'[32] Therefore, along-with an extensive Christian education classical education completed the curriculum of these

[31] For the purpose of this thesis I will focus on Sarah Fielding, Hannah More, Catharine Macaulay and Mary Martha Sherwood. They were well versed in the classical languages as this thesis presents.
[32] Asa Briggs, *How They Lived. Vol.3, An Anthology of Original Documents Written between 1700 and 1815*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), p. 349.

schools.[33] Girls' Academies, on the other hand, were few in number and the governesses who worked there imparted Scriptural morals because, writes Dinah Birch, women were considered to be 'the natural guardians of religious faith'.[34] Their education mostly comprised of needlework, dance, music, reading and writing. 'The same studies that raise the character of a man should hurt that of a woman' forced Mary Astell (1666-1731) to write against this difference in education.[35]

A Serious Proposal to the Ladies by Mary Astell (1694) underlines the significance of education in the fight for women's equality.[36] The lines quoted in the epigraph to this chapter express the crux of Astell's message. In these lines Astell asks women to stand together against the stereotypes that men hold against them, stereotypes that establish women as beings of outward beauty who are deprived of any rational faculty. She asks women to be stronger than the poems that portray them as weak and louder than the panegyrics that are sung to defame them. However, in the next line she clarifies that this revolution is not a revolution of action but of mind. She asks women to ennoble their 'minds with such graces as

[33] With the establishment of private schools in the eighteenth century and parents' growing uncertainty towards the study of the classics their popularity declined from the second half of the eighteenth century. Between 1740 and 1765 the Manchester Grammar School had only 200 students, the Shaftesbury Grammar School was forced to shut down in 1780 due to lack of students and other schools at Monk Kirby, Warwickshire 'claimed that they had nothing to do'. Christopher Hibbert, *The English: A Social History, 1066-1945,* (London: Guild Publishing, 1987), p. 453; A.A. Mumford's *History of Manchester Grammar School* (1919) provides a detail account of the occupations boys entered into after receiving education from a Grammar School with the majority entering industry and commerce. See Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 350.

[34] Dinah Birch, *Education*, p. 341.

[35] Letter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu on October 10, 1753, printed in *Letters and Works* (1861), in Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 365.

[36] Mary Astell was read by Mary Wortley Montagu. In a letter to her daughter Lady Montagu 'confessed her life-long attraction to the proposal to found an "English monastery" for ladies."' Later, Sarah Chapone 'adviced George Ballard to read the Astell-Norris correspondence.' Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal*, p. xiv, xxxvi. Half a century later, Astell still influenced the thinking of rising woman rights activists such as the Bluestockings Group. Astell's *Serious Proposal and* Judith Drake's *An Essay in Defense of the Female A Sex* (1696) 'may well have come into the hands of some of the Bluestocking women, especially Elizabeth Montagu and her sister Sarah Scott, through their maternal grandmother and mother'. Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738-1785,* Vol.1, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), p. xl.

really deserve it' because it is only through proper education that they can challenge men and contribute in the development of society.

Mary Astell's *A Proposal* was a response to John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693). In the words of Jane Rendall Astell rejected Locke's empiricism and challenged his 'orthodoxy in the name of a religious and Platonic philosophy' which lay emphasis on freedom of choice for women in the pursuit of virtuous conducts.[37] Locke's treatise revolved around the idea of education and a perfect educator. His 'Epistle Dedicatory to Edward Clarke of Chipley' states that

> The well educating of their children is so much the duty and concern of parents and the welfare and the prosperity of the nation so much depends on it, that I would have everyone lay it seriously to heart; and after having well examined and distinguished what fancy, custom, or reason advises in the case set his helping hand to promote everywhere that way of training up youth, with regard to their several conditions which is the easiest, shortest and likeliest to produce virtuous, useful and able men in their distinct callings.[38]

In these lines Locke states that education begins at home. It is the responsibility of the parent to educate the child in his initial years. Furthermore, he states that the child should be taught virtues in order to create an honourable career for himself. Every day and at every age the child observes and learns from the world around him, gaining experiences that would help him in creating a better life for himself. However, Astell argues that there is no room for personal growth if a child, and especially a girls, is to be conditioned by man-made circumstances. She writes, 'As long as the human psyche is environmentally conditioned, self-improvement is theoretically impossible and women are condemned to the tyranny of custom and convention, their gaolers hitherto.'[39] Pressing on the issues of social and gender

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[37] Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment in Britain c.1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 100-23.
[38] John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, p. 6.
[39] Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: Parts I & II*, p. xx.

inequality Astell disregards Locke's theory of education through circumstantial experiences. As a response to Locke's treatise which focussed only on the education of boys Astell highlighted the difference in education on the basis of gender which persisted in the seventeenth-century society in *A Proposal* and earned for herself the title of the first woman feminist.[40] Astell writes, 'It is not intended she should spend her time in learning *words*, but *things,* and therefore no more languages than are necessary to acquaint her with her useful authors.'[41] She provides an example of the difference in education and describes how women weren't allowed to study or pursue subjects of their interest. Critiquing the society for creating a tradition of reading petty books which add nothing to a woman's education she says that women spend their time reading the sublime genres (this term is more readily used by Gary Kelly to differentiate subjects for women in the eighteenth century which is discussed below), poems or comedies, when they should have been reading the literature of Descartes.[42]

Derek Taylor expands on the true reason behind Astell writing the second version of *A Serious Proposal* in 1697 and writes that 'Astell had misjudged her audience'.[43] In proposing religious academies for women to receive education and to explore individual talents Astell went a little too far by mixing education with religion which led to her disappointment of not being able to stir orthodox men to support her idea of having separate religious academies.[44] As a result, in the second part of *A Serious Proposal* Astell focuses

[40] Alice Browne points towards Astell being a feminist when she writes that 'the pessimistic rational feminism of Chudleigh and Astell is largely made up of ideas from earlier religious writers, but it represents a change in the field of secular writing about women. The response to Astell's *Serious Proposal* is a curious mixture of respect and ridicule.' *The Eighteenth-century Feminist Mind,* (Sussex, The Harvester Press, 1987), p. 100.
[41] Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: Parts I & II*, p. 35.
[42] Alice Browne writes, 'As ladies usually know French, they should read Descartes and Malebranche, instead of wasting this skill on novel-reading.' Alice Browne, *Eighteenth-century Feminist Mind*, p. 96.
[43] Derek Taylor, 'Mary Astell's Work toward a New Edition of a *Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Part II*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 57, (2005), pp. 197-232.
[44] Taylor further writes that 'her detractors won the day by smearing the plan as closet Catholicism', thus providing Astell with no financial support. Ibid.

more on self-education and transforms her idea of religious academies into academic academies with the assertion that it will be disrespecting to God's plan if we do not take responsibility of our own salvation and what better way to do it than deciding how to educate ourselves.[45] Astell, once again disregards Locke's philosophy of 'tabula rasa' as discussed above. Jacqueline Broad in her discussion of *A Serious Proposal* terms gender discrimination as the 'tyranny' of men and proposes strong virtuous friendship among all women as a remedy.[46] In part one of the book, Astell writes,

> She is, it may be, taught the Principles and Duties of Religion, but not Acquainted with the Reason and Grounds of them; being told 'tis enough for her to believe, to examine why and wherefore, belongs not to her […] For tho' the heart may be honest, it is but by chance that the Will is right if the Understanding be ignorant and Cloudy. And what's the reason that we sometimes see persons falling off from their Piety, but because 'twas their Affections, not their Judgement, that inclin'd them to be Religious?[47]

Commenting and reasoning on the seventeenth and the eighteenth-century notions of women being natural adherents of religious doctrines Astell here explains that a faulty education and the deceitful customs of men cloud women's opportunities of learning and exploring. She explains that if a woman is not taught to reason what she learns her learning is never her own and will eventually be of no use. Astell indirectly critiques men and especially teachers who instruct women while educating them rather than directing them to develop their own understanding of the given knowledge. She further explains that it is a rare chance to justify the righteousness of any act committed by a person if the understanding and reasoning capability of that person is ignorant toward the action being committed.[48] Therefore, no act is

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[45] Mary Astell writes, 'To deny the Creator who made us the power to endow us with independent cognition is both to deny God essential attributes and to ignore New Testament exhortations to take responsibility for our own salvation.' Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies,* p. xvii.

[46] Jacqueline Broad, 'Mary Astell on Virtuous Friendship', *Parergon*, 26 (2009), pp. 65-86.

[47] Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: Parts I & II*, pp. 16-17.

[48] Astell's views on understanding and self-analysis in these lines are carried forward by Adam Smith in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Smith personifies self-analysis as the impartial spectator who judges our actions as moral or immoral which is similar to Astell's views that an action can only be called just if the person fully

justified unless the person understands the purpose of that act. Women in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries were prefect examples of this theory because they were never taught to reason with the education provided to them.[49] In the last line Astell comments on religion and religious education and demands the choice of free will for women. Following her previous assertion to teach women to reason she now wants them to shift their collective affections of following established religious principles and understand the reasons behind those principles in order to exercise the freedom of choice.[50] Hence, individual autonomy and equal participation in all aspects of life were the central arguments of Astell's *A Serious Proposal.*

The seventeenth century ended with Mary Astell advocating for women's rights and women's education amidst other popular educational theories of philosophers such as John Locke. As English society progressed from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century feminist debates progressed from mere philosophical discussions on equality to the development of educational theories for a social and political change.[51] Writers such as Damaris Lady Masham, Judith Drake and Mary Astell engaged in philosophical debates of intellectual equality.[52] Astell's proposal for an education that would give women scholarly and moral

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understands its repercussions. Although it is unclear how much of Astell's works were read by Smith, the influence, however less, is evident from these lines. See Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* edited by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

[49] 'At the beginning of the century, people usually discussed the question in terms of how much women should be educated; later, the question was more often posed in terms of how male and female education should differ […] The principal debate over the education of women was whether it should be ornamental, making them pleasing companions for men, or useful, making them good mothers.' Alice Browne, *The Eighteenth-century Feminist Mind,* pp. 102-04.

[50] In London 'Astell entered a circle of High-Church Anglican, aristocratic and Tory women.' Her correspondence with Norris on Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* 'debated the relative autonomy of human motivation and cognition. Astell challenged Norris to accept the corollary of his argument that if God was the author of our pleasure, he was equally the author of our pain.' Therefore, Astell herself reasoned with every knowledge she came across as she professed in her *A Serious Proposal.* Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: Parts I & II*, p. x.

[51] 'Education and intellectual development, seriously conceived, were central to the concerns of enlightened women and capable of expansion towards a broader moral and social role.' Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment in Britain c.1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* p. 18.

[52] 'Unlike Astell, Drake combined a Tory perspective with a Lockean outlook and concepts of 'politeness' to trace an early Enlightenment vision of a sociable and conversational learned world.' Ibid.

development was treated with deference towards the start of the eighteenth century yet views like hers became disputable towards the end. Beliefs about education raised views about the type of rational and moral being a woman should turn out to be as the century went on.

Alice Browne describes this transition regarding the education of women in the eighteenth century when she writes, 'arguments that women should be better educated, physically healthy, able to bring up their children rationally, capable of earning a living if necessary and free to express their affection to their husbands in an honest and direct way, appear in reforming writers of the period who are not politically radical.'[53] Browne refers to the Bluestockings group of the eighteenth century in these lines. Gary Kelly defines a member of the Bluestockings to be a 'supra-domestic woman transgressing into learned (male) discourse' who turned education into an instrument of social change.[54] The educational writings of the Bluestockings didn't just talk about how to shape a perfect woman, instead they examined what her place in society ought to be. From the beginning of the eighteenth century intellectual equality (visible in the works of Sarah Fielding) became the central theme of women writers who also encouraged and celebrated other women writers. As the century surged forward women writers with their conduct books became central to its social, political and philosophical ideas centred on education and equality in education. It took new forms in the works of emerging group of women known as the Bluestockings. The second generation Bluestockings writer Hannah More wrote instructional books on children's education with Scriptural conformity as their sole principle in contrast to the conduct books of Astell, Drake and Fielding that aimed at intellectual and not religious

[53] Alice Browne, *The Eighteenth-century Feminist Mind,* p. 158.
[54] Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738-1785,* Vol. 1, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), p. xxv.

development of a child.[55] (How the second generation Bluestockings differed in their writings from those of their predecessors such as Elizabeth Montagu, Elizabeth Carter or Anna Laetitia Barbauld is discussed in chapter two of this thesis). Therefore, the change in women's writings demanding equality in receiving education in the first half of the eighteenth century to bringing social reforms in the second half of the century highlights their role as crucial in the intellectual and moral development of the English society.[56]

III. EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EDUCATIONAL DOGMAS

In order to understand the debates surrounding the education of women in the first half of the eighteenth century it is necessary to understand the role of the church in the development and governance of educational establishments. There were two established and legally co-equal churches in Britain: the Church of England (Anglican) and the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian). Neither Church allowed women to be ordained or to preach. However, the Toleration Act of 1689 gave freedom of worship to the main dissenting denominations- Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Quakers.[57] One major eighteenth-century religious development was the Evangelical revival in the 1730s. A second wave at the end of the century saw Methodism become a separate denomination following John Wesley's death in 1791. Wesley propagated 'dissatisfaction with the limits of the formal religion' and encouraged people towards Methodism which became popular as the 'vital religion' or the

[55] 'The women known as bluestockings […] defended women's learning as part of an Anglican and domesticated mixed sociability, a salon culture which set itself in opposition to courtly and aristocratic networks.' Ibid.

[56] Works of women writers such as Hannah More, Mary Wollstonecraft and Catherine Macaulay that appeared after the 1750s presented the need for a social reform regarding women's position in society. Alice Brown writes, 'If Hannah More presents women as passive objects of benevolence, like slaves, rather than rebellious claimants of their rights, she shares with Wollstonecraft the view that the condition of women as a group is important for society as a whole and can be changed by political decisions.' Alice Browne, *The Eighteenth-century Feminist Mind,* p. 178.

[57] H. McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914,* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 45-7.

'religion of the heart'.[58] The Church of England, therefore, was divided into factions that held beliefs opposite to each other and as Gary Kelly describes, was attacked from 'both within and without'.[59] From within, it was challenged by the Methodists and from without, it was challenged by the dissenting denominations. Education in the country, too, suffered as a result of these challenges and differences. Dinah Birch explores the curriculums of various eighteenth-century academies, colleges and universities in England and explains the contention between the Church and the English government on the education of its citizens. She writes, 'The reluctance of the Anglican Church and rival Dissenting bodies to hand over control of the schools they sponsored and ran was a major obstacle to nationalized reform.'[60] As the Age of Reason progressed English parents gradually favoured a secular education and removed their children from Charity Schools or Sunday Schools and sent them to public schools. The Church expressed its dissatisfaction, as Birch explains, but refused to let go of its authority.

Charity Schools were set up by Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) which was formed in 1698.[61] By 1730 there were nearly 1500 Charity Schools in England and by 1800 nearly 2000.[62] David A. Reid explains that the SPCK and the Charity Schools were formed on the principle that 'education, especially as related to religion and industry

[58] Wesley's Methodism and Hannah More's Evangelicalism are discussed in detail in chapter two of this thesis, where More explains how she was considered a Methodist and faced difficulties in establishing Sunday Schools in villages such as Cheddar. For further reading on these two denominations of religion, read Asa Briggs, *How They Lived*, pp. 313-39.

[59] Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism,* p. xii.

[60] Dinah Birch, *Education*, (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 333.

[61] There were various other societies that were established in the late seventeenth and the eighteenth century. Society for Reformation of Manners was established in 1691; Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1701; Society for Distributing Religious Tracts in 1782 by John Wesley; Society for Bettering the Condition and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor by Sir Thomas Bernard in 1796. For more information on these societies read Isabel Rivers, 'The First Evangelical Tract Society', *The Historical Journal*, 50 (2007), pp. 1–22.

[62] Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 343.

would help solve problems associated with poverty.'[63] Thus, one aim of these Charity Schools was to teach the poor and the second aim was to teach them only the Bible. Christopher Hibbert briefly explains,

> Whereas Profaneness and Debauchery are greatly owing to a gross Ignorance of the Christina Religion especially among the poorer sort; and whereas nothing is more likely to promote the practice of Christianity and Virtue than an early and pious Education of Youth; and whereas many poor people are desirous of having their Children taught […] [this school will afford them] a Christian and Useful education.[64]

England, according to the SPCK, was losing its Christian values and principles and that 'profaneness and debauchery' reigned supreme amongst the poor. The only way forward was to spread the word of God amongst the poor and thus save England from the ultimate loss of virtues and Christianity. The Charity Schools, therefore, worked towards achieving this objective and taught the Scriptures to its students in order to provide them a better life.[65] They taught children how to live a Christian life. Their curriculums were 'inspired above all else by the desire to promote "social discipline" along with "godly discipline".' [66] However, admission to these schools was limited to children of the middle-class and the upper middle-class. The widespread Calvinistic notion of the child being born with the original sin paved the way for Charity Schools to educate the children in lessons of Christianity.[67] The governing principle of these schools overlooked the Lockean idea of a child's innocence

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[63] David A. Reid, 'Education as a philanthropic enterprise: the dissenting academies of eighteenth-century England', *History of Education,* 39 (2010), pp. 299-317.
[64] Christopher Hibbert, *A Social History,* p. 267.
[65] However, Roy Porter observes that 'they wanted to make the poor neither equal nor affluent, but virtuous and, above all, God fearing.' Porter's observation resonates Sarah Fielding's ideals on education who, through Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1749), focuses on explaining to her readers that the Bible is an unsuitable subject for children below fourteen years of age to study and that making them 'God fearing' under the pretext of teaching them virtues is an unsuitable task for an ideal educator. Roy Porter, *English Society in the 18th Century,* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 292-93.
[66] Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 343.
[67] Stephanie Schnorbus explains how the general view of the eighteenth century 'holds children as having original sin and weak memories and needing direct and intentional parent intervention to gain the hallmarks of humanity, especially reason.' Stephanie Schnorbus, 'Calvin and Locke: Duelling Epistemologies in "The New-England Primer" 1720-1790', *Early American Studies,* 8 (2010), pp. 250-87.

during his initial years and focused on preaching salvation to children in honest acts of devotion. Isaac Watts in 1728 lays emphasis on the necessity of such an education and writes that 'I would persuade myself that the masters and mistresses of these schools among us teach the children of the poor which are under their care to know what their station in life is, how mean their circumstances, how necessary 'tis for them to be diligent, laborious, honest and faithful, humble and submissive, what duties they owe the rest of mankind and particularly their superiors.'[68] An extensive Christian education for a society that was moving at a fast pace with the growth of its industries became one of the reasons for the English parents to withdraw their children from these schools.

Alongside Charity Schools, Sunday Schools were established under the Sunday School Movement which began in 1751. William King was running a Sunday School in Dursley in 1751 and encouraged Robert Raikes to establish another in Gloucester.[69] The Charity Schools taught the poor to read and write and the Sunday Schools taught the Bible.[70] After witnessing an extensive Christian curriculum of these schools the state worried about the type of education being spread and proposed separate colleges and academies for its citizens. Roy Porter presents this contention between the state and the Church in the eighteenth century and writes that 'Deliverance would come not, as the churches had prescribed, through confession, prayer or the blood of the Saviour, but through re-education under suitable philanthropic guidance.'[71] Porter's bent towards a state-run educational system is clear from his words as he criticizes the overtly religious education being spread by the Church and its academic institutions. Irrespective of a proposal for a change in teaching

[68] Isaac Watts, 'An Essay Towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools' in Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 343.
[69] Philip B. Cliff, *The Rise and Development of the Sunday School Movement in England, 1780-1980*, (Redhill: National Christian Education Council, 1986).
[70] Derek Gillard, *Education in England: a history*, May 2018, (Available at <*Education in England: a history*www.educationengland.org.uk/history>) [Accessed 25 November, 2018].
[71] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World,* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 353.

curriculums by the state, the SPCK sponsored schools continued with their established teaching and faced opposition even from the lower classes whose sons sunk into debauchery rather than becoming bishops.[72]

All these developments had implications for women. Girls' education was at the forefront of the debate about social mobility and educational discourses were divided on the basis of gender as learned or noble genres. Only the aristocratic men in public schools were allowed to study the learned discourses which included mathematics, history, philosophy and geography.[73] Women, on the other hand, were left to entertain themselves at home with the noble or sublime genres of tragedies, poems, comedies and devotional prose. Gary Kelly elaborates on this and writes that 'women writers and readers with few exceptions kept to "useful" and "practical" subjects and to "light", entertaining, desultory, occasional and personal forms of *belles-lettres,* including comedy, verse narrative, poems of domestic or quotidian life and subjective experience, educational writing and books for children, conduct books for girls and young women.'[74] In fact, in most cases the education of women was limited to the study of the Bible in Charity Schools and private boarding schools because books containing poems or tragedies were expensive and read only by a handful of the upper-class women.

Furthermore, it was believed that studying the Bible made women literate enough to teach their children and servants, hence, the next step in their education was to learn the adequacies of becoming a good wife. 'These new ideas', says Deborah Simonton, 'ultimately

[72] C.B. Andrews refers to the year 1791 when he writes that parents sent their children to boarding schools in 'false pride and idle hope' because in the end they 'sink into debauchery, disappointment, and end in jail, whilst the fine misses, vain, pert and ignorant, quickly degenerate into harlots.' Andrews, *The Torrington Diaries,* Vol. 2, (1934) in Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 341.
[73] Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle*, p. xviii.
[74] Ibid, p. xix.

charged them with the morality of society through the education of their children.'[75] It was the mother's responsibility to intellectually educate the child in his first ten years and a moral education on the basis of Scriptures limited not only their individual potential but also the possibility of teaching different subjects to their children for an intellectual and moral development. Clara Reeve explores the necessity of educating women for the development of society but lays no emphasis on including Scriptures or the Bible in that education. She writes, 'Enlightenment emphasis on the development of the individual and the female contribution to family and civic society combined with a concern for mothers to educate both themselves and their children appropriately.'[76] Although different philosophies and religious traditions differed in terms of the specifics of women's education, in all cases it revolved around adherence to Christian principles which limited their intellectual capabilities of exploring subjects as men did.[77]

The poor condition of women's education is further exemplified through an advertisement which was published in the *Leeds Mercury* on 2 August, 1743.

> This is to give Notice to all Ladies, and others, who have occasion for Gowns, or Petticoats, drawn for French Quilting, running Patterns or Sprigs, to be wrought in Silk or Worstead; also drawing upon Canvas for Chairs, Fire-Screens, or Stools; likewise she draws Pictures from any Copper-plate or Oil-Piece that shall be sent to her, without ever damaging them; She draws it upon silk or Canvas, to be wrought and then fram'd and glass'd; she also will teach any Person to paint upon Glass, or Water Colours upon Cloth; she will likewise teach any Person to Draw and Work the above. Also she will teach all sorts of Tent-work, White-work, Marking and Plain-work, which is carefully

[75] Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), p. 35.
[76] Clara Reeve, *Plans of Education: With Remarks on the Systems of Other Writers, In a Series of Letters between Mrs. Darnford and Her Friends,* (London: 1792), p. 76.
[77] Simonton further writes that 'Education was a double edged sword: on the one hand, limiting spheres of action, while, on the other, beginning to provide the schooling to expand those limits.' Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* p. 36.

> and expeditiously performed at reasonable Rates; by Mary England at the Charity-School House in *Wakefield.*[78]

This advertisement gives a flavour of some of the prevailing attitudes towards women's education in England in the eighteenth century. The political, the economical, the cultural, the religious and the educational progress (particularly of men) in the eighteenth century when compared with the developments of the previous century were paving the way for an industrial revolution but at the same time they were hindering the social and the educational progress of women in the country.[79] Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus explore the history of British women and associate the period from 1700-1850 with the rise of capitalism in England.[80] The model of emerging capitalism identified men as the breadwinner and relegated women to jobs with lowest wages. Barker and Chalus continue to argue that as men dominated 'a new aggressive economic world' women were forced to retreat 'into graceful indolence in a strictly domestic setting'.[81] They were considered fit only for the house and if at all they were allowed to leave those premises it was only for jobs as an instructor of sewing, painting and designing in Charity Schools as the above advertisement shows.[82] No doubt exceptionally talented women such as Mary Astell and Lady Wortely Montagu raised

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[78] Asa Briggs, *How They Lived. Vol.3, An Anthology of Original Documents Written between 1700 and 1815*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), pp. 365-66.

[79] Jane Rendall explores how the works of John Locke, Isaac Newton and others in the seventeenth century were fundamental to all future developments in England. She explains that 'the Royal Society, the Society of Arts, the Robin Hood Debating Society, the bluestocking salons' served as 'centres of enlightened debate'. Entry of women into such institutions was a rare occasion and the Bluestockings mentioned here was an informal group of educated aristocratic women formed in the middle of the eighteenth century. Irrespective of such an informal literary society which added to the reputation of a learned woman, the general notion of gender biasness persisted in the eighteenth century. 'Women and the Enlightenment in Britain c.1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), p. 11.

[80] Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850, An Introduction,* (Oxon: Routledge, 2005).

[81] Ibid, p. 5; Walter S. Scott, too, writes that for women to employ themselves anywhere outside the house was considered a heresy and that 'it was the duty of women to be fools in every article except what was merely domestic.' *The Bluestocking Ladies,* (London: John Green and Co., 1947), p. 14.

[82] Various institutions of education such as the Charity Schools and the Sunday Schools of the eighteenth century are discussed below.

this concern in the seventeenth and the early eighteenth century but the society preferred reading and attending to male thinkers such as John Locke.[83]

Politically, men debated whether providing education to women and to the lower orders of the society would be of any use in the development of the country.[84] According to Deborah Simonton, 'education is a double-edged sword' which on the one hand forms the basis of any country's progress and on the other hand removes hegemonic orthodox distinctions such as gender divisions.[85] The upper orders in the eighteenth century were well aware of this disadvantage and thus tried to constraint women with excuses such as: 'To instruct them in reading and writing generally puffs them with arrogance, vanity, self-conceit and […] unfits them for the menial stations which Providence has allotted to them.'[86] The general notion prevailed that educating women in the same subjects as men or educating them at all was unnecessary.[87] Christopher Hibbert mentions the difference in education of the rich and the poor women and writes that the rich women were given lessons by a private tutor or were sent to an expensive boarding school whereas poor women, if at all sent to a school,

[83] Lady Montagu writes in a letter dated 10 Oct. 1753 that 'We are educated in the grossest ignorance, and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason; if some few get above their nurses' instructions, our knowledge must rest concealed, and be useless to the world as gold in the mine.' Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 365; Mary Astell argued for the establishment of nunneries for women where they could receive decent education. Many male writers such as Gilbert Burnet, Daniel Defoe and Richard Steele mentioned by Patricia Springborg in the introduction to *A Serious Proposal* agree and support Astell's proposal but not without some indignation. Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: Parts I & II,* p. xiii-iv. For further reading on the popularity of Astell's works read Derek Taylor, 'Mary Astell's Work toward a New Edition of a *Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Part II*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 57, (2005), pp. 197-232.

[84] Christopher Hibbert traces this gender biasness in the education of women in England and notes how some men at the beginning of the eighteenth century 'utterly affirm that it is not only neither necessary nor profitable, but also very noisome and jeopardus.' *The English: A Social History, 1066-1945,* (London: Guild Publishing, 1987), p. 272.

[85] Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* p. 36.

[86] J. Fawel, *The Principles of Sound Policy* (1785) in Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 342.

[87] Even Hannah More believed that middle class women would never stumble upon any foreigners so there was no need for them to study foreign languages or even attempt to learn them because they would only be housewives. She ridicules the word 'accomplishment' in *Strictures* because, according to her, such women understood it as 'perfection' after coming out of academies and started behaving like ladies. Read *Strictures*, Vol. 1 (London: 1799), p. 69.

were taught needlework and rarely any reading or writing.[88] A well-known proverb in the eighteenth century, also mentioned by Lady Wortley Montagu, was: 'Beware of a young wench, a prophetess and a Latin woman.'[89] Thus, the idea of an educated woman was considered not only an unnatural phenomena but also a danger to society as this proverb outlines. It is not surprising that such thoughts met with extreme criticism from women irrespective of their class. For example, Hannah Woolley, author of *The Gentlewoman's Companion* commented: 'Most in this depraved later Age think a woman Learned and Wise enough if she can distinguish her Husband's bed from another's.'[90] Gary Kelly and Elizabeth Eger, too, mention how a woman in the eighteenth century was considered merely as a supporting subordinate for man and how her duties as a housewife remained solely to provide 'polishing and civilising influence on men'.[91]

IV. THE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE OF TEACHING CRITICAL INTERPRETATION: SARAH FIELDING, HANNAH MORE AND MARY MARTHA SHERWOOD

One female writer who tolerated the envy of her own brother as a result of her literary progress was Sarah Fielding.[92] Henry Fielding was a famous playwright but as a novelist,

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[88] He provides examples of Lady Newdigate, Lady Jane Grey, Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Mary and Queen Anne from the rich class who were not only prodigious (especially Lady Jane and Queen Elizabeth I) but had the opportunity of a decent education. Christopher Hibbert, pp. 272-73.

[89] Ibid, p. 274. Also see footnote 83 where Lady Montagu mentions that a learned woman must keep her knowledge concealed.

[90] Christopher Hibbert, *The English,* p. 274.

[91] The polishing and civilising influence mentioned here is in reference to the harsh nature of men who are unable to control their anger and emotions. Women in the eighteenth century entered into the institution of marriage not because they wanted to but because they were required to maintain the house when their husbands returned from work. Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738-1785,* Vol.1, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), p. xxiii. For further reading on eighteenth-century women and marriage see Tanya Evans, 'Women, marriage and the family', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 57-77.

[92] Arlene Wilner observes that Sarah Fielding was 'a keenly intelligent, intellectually accomplished and productive writer, who by virtue of her gender was denied the educational and professional opportunities available to her celebrated brother Henry.' 'Education and Ideology in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 24 (1995), pp. 307-27, p. 308.

according to Tom Keymer, he was no match for the likes of Samuel Richardson or Lady Wortley Montagu.[93] Sarah Fielding helped her brother with his novels sometimes by writing introductions and sometimes by writing an entire chapter. Ingrid Ostade points out that Sarah wrote a three paragraph-letter in Henry's *The History and Adventures of Joseph Andrews* (1742) and yet he envied her literary growth over time.[94] It justifies, as mentioned earlier, that the education of women was not only an afterthought in a society dominated by men but also a subject which attracted suspicion, anger or in the case of Sarah Fielding, envy from their own family.[95] This thesis, therefore, through Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) in chapter one, Hannah More's *Strictures on Female Education* (1799) in chapter two and Mary Martha Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) in chapter three discusses the type of education provided to girls in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century and explores how the educational practice of teaching critical interpretation to children varied for these selected writers from 1749-1820.[96]

I argue that the thing that connects Fielding, More and Sherwood is their shared focus on the development of the skill of critical interpretation in the education of girls. The practice that the three authors focus on in their respective works is teaching children to critically

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[93] Tom Keymer compares the great letter-writers of the eighteenth century and observes that 'to be a really great letter-writer it is not enough to write an occasional excellent letter; it is necessary to write constantly, indefatigably, with ever-recurring zest.' Henry Fielding's letters to her sister when compared with those of Richardson's or of Lady Montagu's, according to Keymer, lacked in language and style. 'The Correspondence of Henry Fielding and Sarah Fielding by Battestin and Probyn', *Review of English Studies*, 46 (1995), pp. 414.

[94] Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 'A Little Learning a Dangerous Thing?' *Language Sciences*, 22 (2000), pp. 339–58. For further evidence read Mrs Piozzi's letter to Rev Leonard Chappelow on March 15, 1795 in Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), p. 143.

[95] Women not only had to suffer the ridicule of outsiders, notes Walter S. Scott, but also the 'kindly rebukes from their own adherents. For example, Lord Lyttleton writes: For wit like wine intoxicates the brain, Too strong for feeble women to sustain.' *The Bluestocking Ladies*, p. 14.

[96] I choose the Bluestocking Hannah More as an intermediary between chapter one and chapter three of this thesis because, irrespective of being contemporaries in the Bluestockings group, Hannah More chooses not to acknowledge Sarah Fielding as a good writer whereas Mary Martha Sherwood was greatly impressed and influenced by Hannah More's evangelical ideas during their meeting in Bath in 1799. Therefore, the writers chosen for this thesis are literally connected to each other.

interpret every book they read in order to acquire virtues and morals. Therefore, an ideal educator or teacher, according to these writers, is one who enhances the interpretative skills of his students. Michèle Cohen writes that 'it is not access to any specific subject, even Latin, but access to a specific method that shaped gendered education' in the eighteenth century and that such a method 'had to be invented or reinvented by each individual or individual school.'[97] In light of Cohen's emphasis on inventing a teaching method this thesis presents the interpretation method adopted by Sarah Fielding, Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood for the education of women in the eighteenth century. However, each writer uses the method for a different purpose and an exploration of these different methods is a second key objective of this thesis. Sarah Fielding lays emphasis on learning to interpret a range of different literary works whereas Hannah More lays emphasis on learning to interpret only the Bible. Mary Martha Sherwood follows in the footsteps of More and rewrites Fielding's *The Governess* in 1820, adding numerous verses from the Bible. Therefore, teaching children to interpret religious texts forms the central point of contention amongst the three writers and exploring the role played by religion, especially Evangelicalism, in shaping the education of women from 1749-1820 forms the central theme of this thesis.

Tracing the development of women's education in the eighteenth century is a broad concept in itself, therefore, in order to better understand and to clearly present the arguments of the three primary writers this thesis also takes into account Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and Catharine Macaulay's *Letters on Education* (1790). Chapter one is followed by an interlude which presents Adam Smith's views on the education of children. It helps us in understanding how Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* paints a familiar picture as that of Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* on a good teacher and on the enhancement of a

[97] Michèle Cohen, 'Gender and "method" in eighteenth-century English education', *History of Education,* 33 (2004), pp. 585-95.

child's interpretative skills. The interlude further helps in establishing a connection between the selected authors in this thesis through a brief examination of the Bluestockings group. Various members of this group present various perspectives to the education of children in the eighteenth century and it is in the exploration of the contrasting perspectives of Catharine Macaulay and Hannah More that the educational philosophy of interpretation is once again (after Fielding) brought to light.[98] Chapter two of this thesis presents how Catharine Macaulay's *Letters* discusses the traits of a good teacher and the importance of interpretation in education which helps in building a direct connection with the ideals of Fielding and Smith. In addition to this, Macaulay condemns and writes about the ill effects of a religious education which is in direct contrast with the ideals of Hannah More. Therefore, the research methodology includes presenting a comparative analysis of the views of Sarah Fielding and Catharine Macaulay on enhancing the interpretative skills of girls for every subject on the one hand and that of Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood on the other. Though Sherwood did not belong to the Bluestockings the evangelical influence exerted by Hannah More on her in just one meeting along-with the fact that she revised and rewrote Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) after seventy years provide an opportunity to examine her less popular, but significant nonetheless, literary career.[99]

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[98] The views of the male guests of the group such as Edmund Burke and David Garrick are presented in the interlude and chapter two respectively. Female members such as Maria Edgeworth believed that 'why should the mind be filled with fantastic visions instead of useful knowledge […] fairy tales after all contained magic (which science had disproved) and prejudiced children.' Sarah Trimmer, too, lay emphasis on the religious upbringing of children and believed that children 'ought in a more special manner to be clothed in humility.' See Roy Porter, *English Society in the 18th Century,* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 277-93; On the other hand, Elizabeth Montagu supports the usage of fairy tales or supernatural beings in the education of children but only if the teacher critically interprets the writer's true intentions in employing such fictional beings. In 'On the Preternatural Beings' (1769) Montagu not only defends Shakespeare's but also Torquato Tasso's and Ludovico Ariosto's usage of 'ghosts, fairies, goblins, elves, nymphs, satyrs, fawns'. Thus the Bluestockings are themselves divided on a proper method of educating children. Elizabeth Montagu, 'An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare, compared with the Greek and French Dramatic Poets' in *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle,* 1738-1785, Vol. 1, ed. by Elizabeth Eger, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), pp. 1-113, p. 51.

[99] In 1799 Mary Martha Sherwood and her brother Marten met Hannah More and her three sisters through Mrs King in Bath. The details of the meeting are not shared by Sherwood in her autobiography but she writes

CHAPTER ONE: SARAH FIELDING'S *THE GOVERNESS* (1749)

This chapter presents how Sarah Fielding, through *The Governess* (1749), aimed at broadening the prospects of women's education with special emphasis on their intellectual progress for an enlightened society. Fielding's only children's novel, *The Governess,* which was published in 1749 is the primary text of chapter one of this thesis. It presents an educational practice that lays emphasis on improving students' interpretative skills, especially of girls, in the eighteenth century. It alienates itself from the early eighteenth-century educational ideas of Mary Astell and the later religious educational ideas of Hannah More (discussed in chapter two).[100] The novel, set in the middle of the eighteenth century, presents a unique method of teaching interpretative skills to young female students for their intellectual development.[101] *The Governess*, which is also considered to be the first book in the genre of children's literature, encapsulates the ideas of philosophers such as John Locke and the Bluestocking Elizabeth Montagu on good education and presents them in a much simplified form to her readers.[102] For example, Montagu justifies Shakespeare's usage of

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that 'the words of advice uttered to my brother were not addressed to a deaf ear, though I might have desired more simplicity in our interview with the excellent Mrs More herself.' Sophia Kelly, *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood: (chiefly Autobiographical) with Extracts from Mr Sherwood's Journal during His Imprisonment in France & Residence in India*, (London: Darton and Co., 1857), p. 206.

[100] Mary Astell suggests establishing separate nunneries for educating women in *A Serious Proposal* (1694-97) whereas Hannah More focuses on teaching only the Bible to women in *Strictures on Female Education* (1799). Sarah Fielding argues that not only should women be taught along-side men but also in the same subjects. She further argues, as is seen from *The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding,* that neither men nor women be taught the Bible in their childhood.

[101] Brian McCrea writes, '*The Governess* has important implications for adults. It offers a model for childhood education with sources in Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* and a subdued call for reforms in the education of young women with affinities to those proposed by the two great Marys- Astell and Wollstonecraft.' 'The Governess or The Little Female Academy by Sarah Fielding (review)', *The Scriblerian and The Kit-Cats*, 39 (2007), pp. 197-98.

[102] In 'Sarah Fielding's Childhood Utopia' Sara Gadeken points out that the first English children's novel was Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). C.W. Sullivan, 'Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults (review)', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 29 (2004), pp. 384-85; John Newberry's *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* (1744), also, talks about the education of children but through games and thus focuses more on learning vis-à-vis amusement. Furthermore, the novel provides a general view on the education of both boys and girls whereas Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) focuses on the education of women and presents other forms of literature to the reader such as fairy tales, plays, autobiographies and poems. For further reading on *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* see Patrick C. Fleming, 'The Rise of The Moral Tale: Children's Literature, The Novel and *The Governess*', *Eighteenth - Century Studies*, 46 (2013), pp. 463-77.

ghosts, fairies, goblins and elves in his plays and says, 'To all these beings our poet has assigned tasks, and appropriated manners adapted to their imputed dispositions and characters; which are continually developing through the whole piece, in a series of operations conducive to the catastrophe.'[103] Montagu explains that the mythical characters used by Shakespeare are given a bildungsroman attribute as a result of which they not only develop as the plot progresses but also support other characters in bringing the plot to an end. Like Montagu, Sarah Fielding also uses fairy tales, fictional autobiographies, fables and dramatic plays to communicate her message and asks her readers to interpret the actions of these characters for learning important morals. It is the induction of such genres of literature (fairy tales, plays) into the education of children which distinguish her novel from the complex and lengthy educational tracts of other prominent thinkers mentioned above, and which help us in understanding how teaching children to critically interpret the books they read strengthens the foundation of their intellectual development.

The plot is set in a female academy where nine young girls study under the care of a governess, Mrs Teachum. Critics argue that Mrs Teachum fulfils the qualifications of an ideal educator set by Locke in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education.*[104] Mrs Teachum not only tries to enhance the intellect of students through her larger plan in the novel but outdoor activities for a healthy body also find equal importance in her weekly schedule. The larger plan which constitutes Mrs Teachum's unique method of punishing children, allowing them the time and space for self-analysis and teaching them important life lessons by critically interpreting for them the books they read is discussed in detail in chapter one. It is also within

[103] Elizabeth Montagu, 'An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare, compared with the Greek and French Dramatic Poets' in *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738-1785*, Vol. 1, ed. by Elizabeth Eger, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), pp. 1-113, p. 52.

[104] Arlene Fish Wilner observes that Mrs Teachum trains these nine young girls in a way that was adopted for the education of boys by Locke, Rousseau and Thomas Day. See 'Education and Ideology in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 24 (1995), pp. 307-27, p. 318; Brian McCrea also states that *The Governess* has its 'sources in Locke's *Thoughts Concerning Education'.* See footnote 101 above.

this larger plan that critics such as Moyra Haslett and Mika Suzuki criticize the absence or the rare presence of Mrs Teachum not only in the classroom but in the novel itself. Haslett points out that the reformation of girls from bad to good is 'effected through the behaviour of other girls rather than the encouragement of the teacher.'[105] Suzuki, too, applauds the benevolent nature of Jenny Peace, the eldest student at the academy, for bringing all the other girls to a realization of their mistakes by developing in them the spirit of companionship. I argue that a deeper and critical study of the novel allows us to understand that it is Mrs Teachum who instructed and directed Miss Jenny to do so. A deeper exploration into the character of Mrs Teachum allows us to further understand how she fulfils the essential qualifications of Locke's ideal educator who lays emphasis on teaching the eldest in order for the young to follow in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education.*

Teaching students to critically interpret every book they read is the central theme of *The Governess* (1749) and exploring it is the central theme of chapter one of this thesis. It is this theme which helps us in understanding Sarah Fielding's thoughts on the education of children. In her letter to James Harris on December 28, 1751 she writes,

> But although it would be indecent for children in the pride of their hearts to tell their parents or tutors that they approve their sentiments, yet would it not be unbecoming for them from the gratitude of their hearts to express their highest acknowledgements for every kind instruction and every new field of knowledge and consequently of pleasure opened to their minds.[106]

These lines explain Fielding's approval of sentiments over reason. She contests on behalf of the 'growing-up' phase of a child and argues that when children come across knowledge that appeals to their senses than to their reason they should not be asked to discard it. Rather, they should be asked to interpret bits of that knowledge which will assist in their intellectual

[105] Moyra Haslett, 'All pent up together: Representations of Friendship in Fictions of Girls' Boarding-Schools, 1680-1800', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 41 (2018), pp. 81-99.
[106] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence,* p. 125.

development. Further in the letter she explains the advantages children reap in having an ideal instructor:

> As little Children then Sir give us leave to consider ourselves and as our kind Instructor accept our thanks for turning our studies from the barren Desserts of arbitrary words, into cultivated Plains where amidst the greatest variety we may in every part trace the footsteps of Reason and where how much soever we wander, yet with such a guide we may still avoid confusion.[107]

In the former lines Fielding prioritizes imagination over reason and in the latter she describes the development of reason after children learn to control and direct that imagination. The skills that direct our imagination into proper interpretation of the 'variety' of knowledge we encounter in books empower us to incorporate virtues for an intellectual development. According to Fielding, a proper education results in the acquisition of virtues for a prosperous society, therefore, an instructor who teaches such interpretative skills to children is the most substantial component of that education. Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* is that instructor and enhancing children's interpretative skills is her constant objective. As Fielding proclaims in her letter to James Harris above that the 'variety' of knowledge available to us amuses our imagination more than our reason Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1749) teaches interpretative skills to the girls at the academy in order for them to direct their imagination towards exploring virtues and morals in fairy tales and plays.

Mika Suzuki, as mentioned earlier, considers *The Governess* (1749) as a book which has the child at the centre and the teacher at the periphery. Undoubtedly the novel is a children's novel which revolves around improving the intellectual lives of nine young female students but, as I argue, it is their governess who is the protagonist. She is not at the periphery, as Suzuki argues, but at the centre of the plot. The absence of the governess (Mrs

[107] Ibid.

Teachum) around those nine girls in the novel is a very important aspect and a tool employed by Fielding to make her readers understand the importance of freedom in education. However, Suzuki terms it as Mrs Teachum's failure as a teacher in the novel and as Sarah Fielding's failure as an educationalist writer. As a result she substitutes Mrs Teachum with Jenny Peace, the eldest student at the academy, for educating the other girls and thus shifts all the credit from the teacher to the student.[108] This provides an opportunity for me not only to explore the teacher-student relationship in *The Governess* in detail but also to bring to light Sarah Fielding's educational philosophy on interpretation which remains hidden in the novel and unexplored by Suzuki. Fielding's *The Governess*, Suzuki writes, is merely a moral philosophy borrowed 'from the thoughts on activities of people in general.'[109] Suzuki's disregard for Fielding's educational philosophy helps us in understanding that initial women's academies did much better than their successors but at the same time she leaves open for exploration the type of education that was provided in those academies and how Fielding struggles to re-employ (because it was already mentioned by Spinoza, Locke, Rousseau as discussed above) Plato's educational philosophy for the education of women in the eighteenth century.[110]

INTERLUDE

The interlude in this thesis serves two purposes. The first is to present a literal connection between all the selected writers in this thesis. This is done through a brief exploration of the Bluestockings group which further helps in covering a timespan of fifty years between Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) and Hannah More's *Strictures* (1799). The second is to

[108] Jenny Peace has been applauded and Mrs Teachum criticized at the same time for her absence by other critics such as Moyra Haslett and Courtney A. Weikle-Mills whose comments are mentioned in chapter one of this thesis.
[109] Mika Suzuki, 'The Little Female Academy and The Governess', *Women's Writing*, 1 (1994), pp. 325-39.
[110] Suzuki explains that the early eighteenth-century academies were gentile and had a 'kindly atmosphere' whereas they turned dull and 'grim' towards its end. However, she writes further that Sarah Fielding's 'personal foresight' had nothing to do with the kindly atmosphere that was in the earlier academies. Ibid.

present how the practice of teaching students to critically interpret all books continues to be the basis of all educational treatises by the selected Bluestockings (both male and female) of the eighteenth century. I present a detail analysis of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) which, like Plato's *The Republic* and Locke's *Thoughts on Education*, discusses the traits of a prudent man. The connection between Adam Smith and Sarah Fielding lies in the importance of imagination in education and the need to control that imagination in which the teacher (prudent man) plays an important role. Smith's educational theory in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) is formulated around sympathy, benevolence, feelings, sentiments, moral judgements and the impartial spectator which mirrors the teaching method of Sarah Fielding, according to whom, young girls can learn moral values by reflecting on the virtuous traits of sympathy and benevolence from their peers. According to Smith, sympathy helps in building benevolent bonds whereas the impartial spectator acts as the motivational drive which allows an individual to sacrifice today for a better future. When Smith writes that 'our imagination, which in pain and sorrow seems to be confined and cooped up within our own persons, in times of ease and prosperity expands itself to everything around us' it reminds us of Sarah Fielding's letter to James Harris in which she focuses on how children must be taught to interpret even those books that appeal to their imagination and feelings.[111] In addition to approbation of sentiments there are other similarities that connect the two authors such as the influence of stoic philosophy and the importance of a teacher (named by Smith as the prudent man) who aims at improving

[111] Children, writes Smith further, due to their lack of interpretative skills 'rarely view' fictional books 'in this abstract and philosophical light' of critical interpretation. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* ed. by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 183.

students' interpretative skills and prevents them from reading religious books until they acquire those skills.[112]

Unlike Plato, Spinoza, Locke and Rousseau who mention a teaching method and focus on improving the interpretative skills of children, Smith's emphasis on interpretation is indirectly understood by drawing similarities between his prudent philosopher and Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum. For example, when Smith writes that as his prudent man 'is cautious in his actions, so he is reserved in speech; and never rashly or unnecessarily obtrudes his opinion concerning either things or persons' we are reminded of how Mrs Teachum permits (but not without a warning) Miss Jenny to continue reading fairy tales to the other girls despite them, according to her, not being a proper source of learning for young children.[113] Mrs Teachum asks Miss Jenny to monitor the class in her absence not only because she is the eldest but also because Mrs Teachum is confident of her obedient, friendly and virtuous nature which will serve, according to her, as an inspiration for the other girls. Miss Jenny's influence on the other girls is explored in detail in chapter one of this thesis but here it helps us in briefly understanding Mrs Teachum's emphasis on having good friends for learning virtues and morals. Adam Smith agrees on this and writes that friendships which arise 'from a natural sympathy, from an involuntary feeling that the persons to whom we attach ourselves are the natural and proper objects of esteem and approbation' last forever as is the case with the girls at Mrs Teachum's academy.[114] *The Governess* presents the ill effects of a bad early education through the lives of the eight girls, apart from Miss Jenny, at the academy. As the novel progresses we learn about the lives of the students prior coming to the

[112] In the introduction to the book it is written that 'Life according to nature was the basic tenet of Stoic ethics, and a Stoic idea of nature and the natural forms a major part of the philosophical foundations of TMS and WN alike.' Smith dedicates the entire part seven of the book to the Stoics and their ideals on education. Ibid, p. 7.
[113] Ibid, p. 214.
[114] Ibid, p. 224-25.

academy and understand that their parents were careless towards their education.[115] Smith highlights the importance of home education in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and explains that public education improves us academically but 'domestic education is the institution of nature'.[116] Thus, with these and other similarities which are explored in detail in the interlude we understand that Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* not only talks about the characteristics of a good teacher, of good friends or the advantages of a proper early education but also that his ideals are in consonance with those of Sarah Fielding on the religious upbringing of children. Both writers lay emphasis on a diverse education and on the development of one's interpretative skills.

CHAPTER TWO: HANNAH MORE'S *STRICTURES ON FEMALE EDUCATION* (1799)

Sarah Fielding's and Adam Smith's views on the religious upbringing of children from chapter one are taken up by Catharine Macaulay in chapter two, and in the form of a comparative analysis put against the views of Hannah More on the same. Macaulay's *Letters on Education* (1790) not only argues in detail the importance of women's education alongside men but also outlines a proper educational curriculum (in letter fourteen) with specific writers and the specific age to study them.[117] In this curriculum she places the study of religious texts at the very bottom (at age twenty-one) because she insists, like Sarah Fielding and Adam Smith, that the child must develop proper interpretative skills from other books before perusing the Scriptures.[118] Furthermore, Macaulay's comments on the study of

[115] All girls relate their autobiographies one after another and we come to know that each of them exhibits wrath, gluttony, sloth, envy, greed and pride. Sukey Jennett is revengeful and beats her servants, Dolly Friendly lies to her parents, Lucy Sly blames others, Patty Lockit envies her sister, Nancy Spruce craves for material pleasures, Betty Ford is jealous of her sister's beauty, Henny Fret despises her brother and Polly Suckling is quarrelsome.

[116] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 222.

[117] Catharine Macaulay, *Letters on education, with observations on Religious and Metaphysical Subjects,* (London: 1790), p. 129.

[118] Letter nine and fifteen explain this in detail which are further explored in chapter two of this thesis.

fairy tales and dramatic plays in letter five, importance of recreational activities in letter six, characteristics of an ideal teacher in letter eleven, and most importantly her comments on interpretation in education in letter nineteen are exactly similar to those of Sarah Fielding and Adam Smith.[119] Macaulay in part three of *Letters* presents how Christian values are similar to Stoic principles which helps us in understanding the influence of stoic philosophy on her. Chapter two explores this in detail but for the purpose of this introduction it suffices to know that, according to Macaulay, reciting a prayer without understanding its meaning will either lose its influence on the person reciting it or develop an enthusiasm completely opposite to the true philosophy and the true religion.[120] Hannah More, on the other hand, openly rejects these ideals of Macaulay in her letter to Mrs Boscawen (explored in detail in chapter two) and lays emphasis on the religious upbringing of children, especially girls.

The Biblical education imparted in Charity Schools and Sunday Schools forms the basis of a literary connection between Catharine Macaulay and Hannah More. The Charity Schools and the Sunday Schools which were established in the 1750s aimed at transforming every child into a perfect Christian (or taking them to 'exalted heights').[121] It is within this historical context that Hannah More explains and advocates the necessity of teaching the Bible to the children in contrast to Sarah Fielding's ideals on the same in chapter one. Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) does not provide to its readers any reference which supports the religious upbringing of a child. The girls at Mrs Teachum's academy are taught to thank God in their short morning prayers and furthermore, Fielding keeps the length of the chapter

[119] All these letters are in part one of *Letters.* In part two we find further resemblance with the ideals of Adam Smith on imagination (letter two) and sympathy (letter eight).
[120] See letter thirteen in part two. Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 334.
[121] Even before Fielding in 1749 who presents her concern regarding the religious upbringing of a child Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, criticized such an education in 1740. He proposed that societies such as the SPCK along-with their Charity Schools do not heighten the notions of religion 'to such *Extremes,* as to lead *some* into a Disregard of Religion itself, through Despair of attaining such exalted Heights.' Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 327.

in which the girls visit the Church on a Sunday morning very short. Unlike Fielding, Hannah More's *Strictures on Female Education* (1799) focuses on teaching children to critically interpret the Bible for the acquisition of morals and presents to its readers a completely opposite stand to Fielding's on the religious upbringing of a child in chapter two of this thesis.

For *Strictures* Hannah More received letters of admiration from Charles Burney, Rev Thomas Robinson, Mrs Montagu, Mr Pepys and William Wilberforce. They praised 'the profession and brilliancy of imagination' of More in 'diffusing the principles of Evangelical truth' to the eighteenth-century English society.[122] However, a critical exploration of *Strictures* on one hand definitely outlines More's emphasis on salvation through Scriptures but on the other hand it also presents to us a series of arguments that contradict her own conclusions. It is in these contradictory arguments that More's emphasis on interpretation for the acquisition of knowledge is brought to light. She begins *Strictures* with a critique on the fashionable eighteenth-century society and states that it lacks the proper knowledge of true Christian principles. She further explains how schools other than the Charity and the Sunday Schools impart unreligious or wrong education to children, and outlines a three-step interpretation model of Scriptures for teachers to teach. In *Strictures* More prophesizes the structure and future of a society, if and when, its citizens adhere to holiness and Christian principles. Therefore, according to More, Christianity (religion) forms an integral part of a child's education and I explore in chapter two of this thesis her three-step interpretation model for learning the Bible.

[122] Read Vol. 2 of Hannah More's *Memoirs* by William Roberts from pages 38- 59 for a detailed understanding of the praises and criticism she received on *Strictures.* Mrs Barbauld and Bishop Porteus ranked among those who criticized More for presenting religious knowledge as the only source for inheriting virtues. William Roberts, *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs Hannah More,* 2 vols, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845).

Chapter two explores the friendship between Hannah More and Rev John Newton and presents that More's emphasis on Evangelicalism is highly influenced from the reverend's own understanding of it. The chapter presents how before meeting Rev Newton she read *The Spectator* at age twelve, met prominent thinkers such as Sheridan and Ferguson at age sixteen, learnt Italian, Latin and Spanish at twenty, and believed in reason before religion. In a letter to Mrs Boscawen in 1781 she mentions that 'reason, religion and time' are the best friends of a pious man, and from this letter we understand that More prioritizes reason over religion not only because she writes reason before religion in this letter but also because it was her strong belief as is understood from her other letters.[123] However, the exchange of letters between More and Rev Newton help us in understanding that it was the reverend's advice which became the stepping stone for More's explicit emphasis on salvation and Evangelicalism in all of her works after 1787. She published *Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society* anonymously in 1788 in order to experiment not only her newly gained wisdom but also to survey people's reactions after they read a religious book. She writes to her sister after publishing the book that,

> Occasions, indeed, continually occur in which I speak honestly and pointedly; but all one can do in a promiscuous society is not so much to start religious topics as to extract from common subjects some useful and awful truth, and to counteract the mischief of a popular sentiment by one drawn from religion; and if I do any little good, it is in this way; and this they will in a degree endure.[124]

Hannah More's works after 1787 which include the *Strictures* (1799) present a great deal of religious views, especially on Evangelicalism because, as she mentions here, 'if she do any

[123] Hannah More was a busy scholar before her visits to London in the late 1770s and 1780s. she writes In a letter in 1776 that 'in the midst of all the pomps and vanities of this wicked town, I have taken it into my head to study like a dragon; I read four or five hours every day, and wrote ten hours yesterday.' The books she read also included books on religion but from the perspective of a literary scholar and not a preacher of Christianity. Dr Johnson's advise to More, discussed in detail in chapter two of this thesis, further helps us in understanding this claim. Roberts, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, p. 49.

[124] Ibid, p. 280.

little good' it will be the only way to do it and 'this they will in a degree endure'. England, according to More, had lost not only its moral sense but also its Christianity and in order to revive or save the country from a devastation like that of France's it was necessary to spread the word of God to all, especially to the poor.[125] In light of this More started her own Sunday Schools at Cheddar and aimed at teaching the Scriptures and the Bible to the children of the poor, especially girls.

Joanna Wharton explores the 'material psychology' of Hannah More and explains how charity was an attribute associated with the women of the eighteenth century. She looks at More's evangelical philosophy in contrast with Wollstonecraft's radical feminism and Locke's 'tabula rasa'. She writes, 'the Christian profession More offers women as a mode of patriotic action draws on her Lockean pedagogy, as well as her notion of vital spirit.'[126] She explains that charity was not only a profession suited for women but also an idea to arouse patriotism in society. Hannah More, continues Wharton, in addition to charity lays emphasis on the Christian upbringing of girls in schools in order to advance the patriotic feeling and to save England from deterioration because, according to More, those girls will become mothers in future and can only instil Christian values in their children if they have themselves been taught the Scriptures.[127] Wharton's analysis adds to our understanding of the two important movements of the eighteenth century, the evangelical movement and the feminist movement.

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[125] She describes the poor condition of France to Mr Walpole in 1789 and writes, 'these people seem to be tending to the only two deeper evils than those they are involved in; for I can figure to myself no greater mischiefs than despotism and popery, except anarchy and atheism.' Hannah More now viewed Catholicism in doubt and incapable of providing true morals whereas earlier she eagerly read Catholic books in order to quench her scholarly thirst. Such was the influence of Rev Newton on her. Ibid, p. 328.

[126] Joanna Wharton, 'Lasting Associations: The Material Psychology of Anna Letitia Barbauld, Hannah More, and Elizabeth Hamilton' (published PhD theses, University of York, 2014), p. 189.

[127] There are various instances in *Strictures* where More explains the sorrow state of eighteenth-century England and how the solution lies in spreading the word of God amongst people, especially the lower classes. For example, she writes, 'If the love of our country be judged a fair principle, surely a Christian, who is a citizen of no men city, may lawfully have his attachments too. If patriotism be an honest prejudice, Christianity is not a servile one.' *Strictures,* p. 237; For more examples read chapter one, two, three and ten which also talk about the responsibility of mothers.

The latter is beyond the scope of this thesis and the former is dealt with in detail in chapter two and three of this thesis. What Wharton misses out in her exploration of the works of Hannah More is that More does not follow the 'Lockean pedagogy;' rather, her *Strictures* present a contradiction with Locke's ideals on education. Furthermore, More's emphasis on an early religious education of children which expresses her own 'notion of vital spirit' (evangelicalism) still has its roots in the classical philosophy of interpretation in education. The three-step interpretation model presented in *Strictures* by More helps us in understanding that the method of educating children in the eighteenth century remains the same, it is only its application that varies from educationalist (Sarah Fielding) to educationalist (Hannah More).

Evangelicalism affected not only the schools in England but was also spread to other countries such as India under the missionary project. Hannah More's works were widely read by the bishops who travelled from England to India. These missionaries not only preached Christianity but also presented the Bible and other books on Christianity as gifts to the kings there. More writes to one of her sisters in 1795 that she 'received a letter by the last ships from India, from Mrs Torriano' who was in contact with a missionary named Gericke. This man had presented the Rajah of Tanjore with Hannah More's *An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World* (1791). Mrs Torriano continues in her letter that Mr Gericke had often delivered sermons from More's book 'but did not know, till she told him, who was the author of it.'[128] Missionaries of the Church of England played an important role not only in spreading Christianity to distant lands but also in the lives of Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood. For the purpose of this thesis I explore how prior coming into contact with Rev John Newton and Rev Parson both Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood respectively

[128] William Roberts, *Memoirs of Mrs Hannah More,* Vol. 1, p. 460.

led a scholarly life and that they kept religion (studying the Bible) and the study of other books separate.

CHAPTER THREE: MARY MARTHA SHERWOOD'S *THE GOVERNESS* (1820)

Mary Martha Sherwood's (1775-1851) journey towards becoming an evangelical traces a similar path as that of Hannah More's. Similar to Rev Newton's influence on Hannah More Rev Parson too exerts a strong evangelical influence on Sherwood. Chapter three of this thesis explores how Sherwood received a decent education, a situation completely opposite to that of Sarah Fielding's, especially when it came to learning Latin and Greek.[129] Furthermore, the chapter presents how her father's library in her childhood served to be the ultimate source of her literary development whereas the Biblical lessons taught by her mother were put aside as mandatory 'daily tasks' for her to complete.[130] As the chapter progresses we understand that in her childhood Sherwood preferred reading various books from her father's library which included fairy tales, plays and poems (books completely disapproved by Hannah More) of famous writers than studying the Bible from her mother. The question then arises that why Sherwood rewrote Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* in 1820 as an Evangelical tract irrespective of having no interest in the study of religious books. Chapter three of this thesis explores the answer to this question and presents how Rev Parson, who having read More's works, encouraged Sherwood into adopting Evangelicalism.

Sherwood's autobiography helps us in understanding not only the type of education she received or her ideals on the education of children but also the extent to which sorrow and death affected her literary pursuits. Mrs Sherwood lost her father in 1796 and her first

[129] Sherwood's biographer M. Nancy Cutt explains that she lived a life of 'personal freedom' which was quite unusual for Victorian children. *Mrs Sherwood and Her Books for Children,* (OUP: London, 1974), p. 1.
[130] Sherwood herself uses the word 'daily task' in her autobiography to identify her mother's Biblical lectures. It is discussed in detail in chapter three of this thesis.

child in India in 1807 and was unable to cope with the tragedy for a long time. It is at this point that Rev Parson enters Mrs Sherwood's life and tries to revitalize her with motivational Biblical verses. He tries to make her understand the irrelevance of crying for mortal humans in the face of that immortal Being who deserved her utmost attention and dedication. Rev Parson as a true missionary of Christianity tries to invigorate in Mrs Sherwood the true zeal of Evangelicalism and directs her towards the path of salvation. This situation reminds us of Hannah More who after the death of David Garrick sunk into solitude and was rescued by Rev Newton through a similar speech as the one given by Rev Parson to Mrs Sherwood here. This forms, for the purpose of this thesis, a strong base that connects the lives of Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood to Evangelicalism and which further helps us in understanding the role played by Christian missionaries in the lives of these female writers. Furthermore, since Evangelicals worked for the salvation of all and since Hannah More's Sunday Schools aimed at spreading Biblical education to the poor it is not wrong in assuming that it became necessary for Sherwood to rewrite the first children's book with religious connotations in order to advance the Evangelical cause.

Mary Martha Sherwood keeps the original plot of *The Governess* (1749) in her revised version (1820) and removes only the fairy tales, the play and the poem used by Sarah Fielding. Sherwood, at every possible opportunity, induces verses from the Bible and rewrites every moral instruction provided by Fielding to her readers as an instruction from the Bible. Chapter three of this thesis presents a detailed comparative analysis of the two *Governesses* and identifies the changes made by Sherwood. An important thing to be noted is Sherwood's emphasis, just like Hannah More's in *The Strictures* (1799), on the ideal teaching method of critical interpretation in *The Governess* (1820). As chapter two of this thesis presents that Hannah More focuses on the critical interpretation of the Bible chapter three of this thesis presents that Sherwood, too, focuses on the critical interpretation of the

Bible for the acquisition of true virtues and morals. For both writers the Bible is the only legitimate source to acquire morals and virtues whereas for Sarah Fielding it is every possible book one can get hold of. The only condition argued by all the three writers is that that book should be critically interpreted.

Nandini Bhattacharya's study of the works of Sherwood primarily focus on the theme of colonialism and how Sherwood used it to advance her own evangelical motives. She writes that Sherwood 'was writing at a time when the secularization of the child's power to reform tired, corrupt society triggered hegemonic anxiety.'[131] The eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries were difficult times for England since the outbreak of the French Revolution led to a social, political and religious turmoil in the country which further paved the way for debauchery and corruptness as Bhattacharya mentions here. At a time like this the importance of education was highlighted by many thinkers and thus the child became an important figure for development and progress. The figure of the child furthermore aided in the missionary project of England as a result of which critics such as Bhattacharya focus more on the colonial aspect of the works of Sherwood rather than focusing on the specifics of her pedagogy.[132] The child became an important asset, according to Bhattacharya, who helped in maintaining hegemonic control in the British colonies. Chapter three of this thesis builds on Bhattacharya's argument by focusing on the pedagogical aspect of Sherwood's life and works, especially her educational philosophy in *The Governess* (1820). Irrespective of the fact that her evangelical life began in India under the influence of Rev Parson her literary life in England prior to that cannot be overlooked. It is in her childhood and in her adolescence

[131] Nandini Bhattacharya, 'Maternal plots, Colonialist Fictions: Colonial Pedagogy in Mary Martha Sherwood's Children's Stories', *Nineteenth Century Contexts* (2001), p. 385.

[132] Other critics such as Samir Soni and Ashok Malhotra, too, focus on studying colonialism and evangelicalism in the works of Sherwood and completely overlook *The Governess* along-with its educational philosophy. This is discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

that she learns the educational philosophy of interpretation from her father (discussed below) which is later visible in *The Governess* (1820).

The critics mentioned above talk only about one facet of the education of children in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century by providing to us information on various institutions of education such as Charity Schools, Sunday Schools and women's academies, and how they were affected by movements such as Evangelicalism, Feminism or Colonialism. This thesis presents another facet of the education of children, especially girls, in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century and explores in detail the unique educational practice of teaching critical interpretation to children. This practice not only connects but also simultaneously differentiates the ideals of the three selected writers on the education of women. Therefore, understanding how these writers differ from each other on the application of interpretation in the education of girls forms the central theme of this thesis. This thesis explores the broad concept of the education of women in England in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century and narrows it down to the exploration of how Evangelicalism influenced not only the educational institutions but also some women writers of the time. Through a close analysis of the works of Sarah Fielding, Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood this thesis identifies a unique teaching method of critical interpretation which was applied and emphasized by the three writers for the education of women along-with their emphasis on an ideal educator who uses that method. With the advent of Evangelicalism tracing the development and the changes in the education of English women in the eighteenth century is no new feat. This thesis adds to a long list of earlier studies done on the subject but with a new perspective of finding a common ground in the works of women educationalists who held contrasting beliefs on the education of women. Sarah Fielding wishes for an equality in education of both men and women whereas Hannah More accepts the intellectual superiority of men over women and advocates for a religious

upbringing of women which is, according to her, most suited to their station. The Evangelical Mary Martha Sherwood, too, lays emphasis on a religious upbringing of girls at home and at schools in order to fulfil Evangelicalism's objective of salvation. This thesis explores how Hannah More and Sherwood were not devoted religious persons from their childhood but were turned into one later in their lives by Rev Newton and Rev Parson respectively. An exploration of their lives prior to this transformation provides an opportunity to understand and find a common ground with the ideals of Sarah Fielding on the education of women which ultimately lies in teaching girls to critically interpret any book they read for the acquisition of virtues and morals.

CHAPTER 1: CRITICAL INTERPRETATION FOR INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT- SARAH FIELDING'S *THE GOVERNESS* (1749)

> Exalt and establish your fame, more than the best wrought *Poems* and loudest *Panegyricks*, by ennobling your minds with such graces as really deserve it.[133]

This chapter focuses on the education of women in the first half of the eighteenth century, looking in particular at Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). It argues that Fielding prioritizes enhancing critical interpretative skills of children for their intellectual development and for the acquisition of knowledge.[134] Through a close analysis of her book on education this chapter presents how Sarah Fielding aims at the intellectual growth of female children by inculcating in them the skill of critical interpretation. She creates Mrs Teachum as the ideal educator in *The Governess* who focuses on proper interpretations of the books her students read and lays emphasis on a proper early education. Therefore, distinguishing suitable subjects or books for the intellectual development of a child along-with a teacher who induces critical interpretative skills in his students for those subjects are the most important features of *The Governess.* Sarah Fielding's interest in Socratic philosophy also helps in establishing the emphasis on interpretation presented in *The Governess* and which this chapter aims to explore.[135] The philosophy of Socrates is a vast concept on its own and to analyse its influence on the English literature of the eighteenth century goes beyond the

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[133] Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: Part I (1694) and Part II (1697)*, ed. by Patricia Springborg, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1997), p. 6.

[134] *The Governess,* a literary work in the genre of children's literature represents an aspect of the education of women in eighteenth-century England. It is to be noted that Fielding addresses 'young readers' in her preface to the novel, irrespective of all the characters in the novel being girls. Therefore, Fielding's ideals regarding education in *The Governess* are applicable to both boys and girls. However, I intend to explore only girls' education in the first half of the eighteenth century in this chapter and the term is substituted with 'children's education' only when I refer to *The Governess* as part of a literary genre written for children. Sarah Fielding, *The Governess; or, Little Female Academy,* Printed for A. Bradley and R. James, (Dublin: 1749), p. iv.

[135] Emphasis on interpretation and the interest in Socratic philosophy also bridges the ideals of Fielding and Hannah More in chapter two. However, More disregards the ideals of Socrates and presents a different model of interpretation for the moral and not the intellectual development of the child.

purpose of this thesis.[136] Therefore, the focus here is on friends and mentors who help Sarah Fielding develop interest in the classics and how that interest further influences her to focus on developing female children's interpretative skills.

Sarah Fielding (1710-1768) learned Latin and Greek during her childhood at Mary Rooke's School in Salisbury in the 1720s but her friends Arthur Collier, William Young and James Harris helped her develop a firm grip on these languages before she began writing in the 1740s.[137] However, her brother's envy towards her developing intellect halted her pursuit until his death in 1754.[138] In the 1750s James Harris helped Elizabeth Carter, a friend of Sarah Fielding, with the translation of Arrian's *Discourses of Epictetus and Enchiridion* which was published in 1758.[139] It sold more than a thousand copies and motivated Fielding to restart the pursuit of her own interests in this literature.[140] The correspondence of James Harris and Sarah Fielding from 1758 to 1762 inform us of the Xenophon project. Harris provided copies of Conyers Middleton's *The History of the Life of Marcus Tullius Cicero* (1741) and John Potter's *Archaeologiae Graecae, or the Antiquities of Greece* (2 vols.; 1697,

[136] Greek authors were widely read in schools in the early eighteenth century. Penelope Wilson writes, 'Sarah Fielding, like her brother Henry best known as a novelist, was more self-deprecating about her classical attainments and her chosen text was the staple of many a schoolboy's education: "the memorabilia are so much read in the schools, that every person the least tinctured with learning, may be supposed to be acquainted with the subject" (Tobias Smollett in the *Critical Review* for March 1762).' Penelope Wilson, 'Sarah Fielding, Trans., Xenophon's Memorabilia and The Apology of Socrates', *XVII-XVIII*, 74 (2017), pp. xvii-viii.

[137] Arthur Collier and William Young were well versed in the Greek and Latin languages and tutored Sarah Fielding in the 1740s. James Harris, held in high regard by the Fieldings, provided notes to Sarah regarding the translation of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* which she published as *Memoirs of Socrates* in 1762. For further reading on their friendships, refer to Christopher D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding,* First Ed. (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2017), and Clive T. Porbyn, 'James Harris to Parson Adams in Germany: Some Light on Fielding's Salisbury Set', *Philological Quarterly*, 64 (1985), pp. 130-40.

[138] Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 'A Little Learning a Dangerous Thing?' *Language Sciences*, 22 (2000), pp. 339–58.

[139] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), p. 175.

[140] Carter worked on the translation from 1748 to 1757 to help Catherine Talbot overcome the death of Elizabeth Secker. Therefore, Fielding read Greek literature before writing *The Governess*. Timothy Dykstal writes, 'Among Sarah Fielding's works, too, was a translation of the classical writer Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* (1762), a work that she probably undertook after noting the success of Carter's translation (which sold more than 1000 copies by subscription and which she too found appealing for its pointed style and home truths.' 'Provoking the Ancients: Classical Learning and Imitation in Fielding and Collier', *College Literature*, 31 (2004), pp. 102-22.

1699) to Sarah for some observations on translations before she put pen to paper.[141] After perusing these books Fielding started translating Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* and completed it in 1762.[142] In order to establish the birth of Fielding's emphasis on critical interpretation from her interest in Socratic philosophy this chapter tries to provide a comparative analysis of the ideals of Socrates in *Memoirs* (1762) and of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1749) and establishes that the latter reflects on the former.[143]

Sarah Fielding wrote *The Governess: or Little Female Academy, For the Entertainment and Instruction of Young Ladies in Their Education* in 1749 after her experiment with the representation of latitudinarian characters in her first novel, *The Adventures of David Simple* in 1744.[144] Religion and religious sentiments occupied a larger portion of eighteenth-century literature such as in the works of Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) or Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), and as Fielding's literary development was greatly indebted to Richardson her first novel, too, presented Christianity as its central theme.[145] Her later

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[141] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence,* p. 153.

[142] It caught the eye of the Bluestockings group, especially of Elizabeth Montagu who writes to Elizabeth Carter that 'I desire my particular compliments to Mrs Fielding on her excellent book. I know nothing of the heathen Greek, but Socrates in her translation speaks in character.' Ibid, p. 175. The Bluestockings are discussed in detail in chapter two of this thesis as their views regarding education of children contradict with those of Fielding's here.

[143] An example of Sarah's interest and approval of the Socratic ideals is visible in her letter to James Harris on April 9, 1761. Her views on politics and governance resonate the views of Plato on the same. She expresses a similar pity towards people who refuse the office of governance on accounts of their disinterest as is expressed by Plato who writes that inferior men would rule when superior men refuse the offices of governance. For Sarah's letter refer to Martin Battestin and Clive Probyn, *The Correspondence,* p. 167. For Plato's arguments on the same refer to *The Republic: The Influential Classic,* ed. by Tom Butler-Bowdon, (West Sussex: Capstone Publishing Ltd., 2012), p. 34.

[144] Latitudinarians were a group from the University of Cambridge in the seventeenth century who believed that human reason, when combined with the Holy Spirit, was a sufficient guide for the determination of truth in doctrinal contests. In the above lines I call Sarah's first novel as an experiment because all her later works abstain from any Christian guidance to her readers while discussing social issues of independence and education for women. These other works are discussed in brief later in the chapter. Emily C. Friedman, too, terms Fielding's novels in the 1740s and 1750s as 'experimental' and writes, 'Throughout her writing life, but especially after her experimental pieces in the late 1740s and early 1750s, she sought not only to illustrate ideals or even to promote achievable good in an imperfect world, but also to provide readers spaces for their own reflection and reason-based improvement.' Emily C. Friedman, 'Remarks on Richardson: Sarah Fielding and the Rational Reader', *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 22 (2009), pp. 309-26.

[145] Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) presents the different aspects of Christianity through Crusoe. His beliefs suffer spontaneous changes during his voyage, after his shipwreck and when he meets Friday. Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), too, represents the aspects of Christianity through Pamela, who struggles against

works such as *The Governess* (1749), *Volume the Last* (1753), *The Cry* (1754), *The History of Countess of Dellwyn* (1759) or *The History of Ophelia* (1760) present the repercussions of a wrong early education, identity crisis, gender equality in society and economic independence for women respectively as their central themes.[146]

Women writers of the early eighteenth century represented a radical superiority of women over men. Margaret A. Doody writes that 'In the novels or novellas of writers like Elizabeth Rowe, Mary Davys, Jane Barker or Eliza Heywood, the heroine, however disadvantaged, can implicitly defy the world of masculine authority around her by becoming the centre of the narrative.'[147] However, *The Governess'* central theme is the education of children which separates it from the works of these women writers. It is the first full-length children's novel and it underwent seven editions with the last edition being published in 1789.[148] It describes the work of Mrs Teachum who transforms her nine female students at her academy into virtuous students and dutiful citizens without inculcating any obligation towards Christianity. Instead, she inculcates the skill of critically interpreting every book they read from fairy tales to contemporary play texts for moralistic lessons. She allows the imagination of the students to roam free whilst the stories are being read, but develops in

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the immoral advances of her employer whilst maintaining a strong religious character. How Sarah Fielding's literary career was initiated, helped and influenced by Richardson is discussed in detail after the section on Eighteenth-Century Educational Dogmas.

[146] For further reading on Fielding's other works see Sylvia Kasey Marks' 'Sarah Fielding's *The Governess:* A Gloss on Her Books upon Education', *Women, Gender and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Essays in Memory of Betty Rizzo*, Bethlehem, (PA: Lehigh UP), pp. 59-78.

[147] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded (1740),* ed. by Peter Sabor with an introduction by Margaret A. Doody, (London: Penguin Classics, 1985), p. 8.

[148] The difference in editions majorly comprised of changes in the novel's title whenever published by a different publisher. The information given below is taken and available at University of Sheffield's Star Plus Library Catalogue which provides the different versions of the novel. The first publisher was A. Miller, who printed the first edition for the author in 1749 along-with six more editions in 1749, 1751, 1758, 1768 and 1781. Apart from six editions published by A. Miller, A. Bradley and R. James had published another edition in 1749. The 1791 version of the novel does not mention the edition, or the publisher's name. It only mentions Dublin as the place of publication. However, the British Library Catalogue provides other versions of the novel published in 1765, 1769, 1789, 1804, 1968, 1987 and 2005, each under a different publishing house. DOI: <http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?ct=&pag=&indx=1&pageNumberComingFrom=2&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&ct=Next%20Page&tab=local_tab&fn=search&indx=11&dscnt=0&vl(freeText0)=the%20governess%20or%20the%20little%20female%20academy&dstmp=1586553844459#>.

them the ability to question and interpret those stories later for virtuous morals.[149] This chapter explores the larger plan of Mrs Teachum in transforming the girls from undisciplined students with an immature fascination for selfish amusements to disciplined students with the ability to choose the best for themselves. It explores in particular the motive behind the punishments that Mrs Teachum delivers and the critical interpretation provided by her regarding a play read by the fourteen-year-old Miss Jenny Peace, the eldest student at the academy.

Lissette Carpenter argues that in advocating the broader concept of women's education in the eighteenth century Fielding's *The Governess* is 'forward looking' but does not present any 'kind of feminist revolution'.[150] Carpenter writes, 'As a part of her feminist message, the author creates […] schoolmates as living examples of the feminine failings promoted by the denial of significant training of the mind.'[151] Carpenter establishes *The Governess* as a feminist novel by focussing on the feminine faults experienced by the girls prior coming to the academy such as jealousy, envy and pride.[152] I argue instead that the novel focuses more on the type of education that would help girls become successful without having to look back on their former faults because representing the merits of a proper education is the ultimate aim of Sarah Fielding in the novel. Christopher D. Johnson provides a detail analysis of Sarah Fielding's life and education in his latest work, *A Political*

[149] Teaching the skill of interpreting various sources of knowledge differentiates *The Governess* from John Newberry's *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* (1744) which teaches morals to children through games. Newberry merged didactic literature with children's literature for the first time and re-defined children's novel as a genre with potential beyond amusement. For further reading on *A Little Pretty Pocket Book,* see Patrick C. Fleming, 'The Rise of The Moral Tale: Children's Literature, The Novel and *The Governess*', *Eighteenth - Century Studies*, 46 (2013), pp. 463–77.

[150] Arlene Fish Wilner, 'Education and Ideology in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 24 (1995), p. 308, pp. 307-27.

[151] Lissette F. Carpenter, 'Sarah Fielding: A Mid-Century Link in Eighteenth-century Feminist Views', (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Texas A&M University, 1989), p. 73.

[152] For example, Miss Patty Lockit is envious of her sister's extraordinary intellect, Miss Betty Ford is jealous of her sister's beauty and Miss Nancy Spruce takes pleasure in material things such as fine dresses and jewellery. All these are referred as feminine faults by Carpenter.

Biography of Sarah Fielding (2017). In his analysis of *The Governess* he writes, 'Hoping to foster personal happiness, she sets out to train young girls to think independently, so that they can forsake their own self-interest.'[153] Johnson's central argument in his interpretation of Mrs Teachum's larger plan is that she wants freedom of thought for the girls. He argues that Fielding constructs an academy whose governess teaches her students to think independently. I argue instead that the governess teaches her students to interpret independently any knowledge they encounter because freedom of thought allows children's imagination to grow without any restrictions, whereas critical interpretation directs the imagination of a child towards a proper analysis of the books he reads and for the purpose of this chapter towards a proper interpretation of fairy tales and plays.

The central argument of this chapter which focuses on critical interpretation as the primary lesson in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* is explored through Mrs Teachum's larger plan and Miss Jenny Peace's position at the academy. Mrs Teachum's larger plan is to teach interpretative skills to her students and the instructions she provides regarding fairy tales and the play only form a part of that plan. In order to understand it in its entirety it is necessary to analyse the motive behind her punishments and the reason for her limited appearances in the novel. Mrs Teachum's absence raises criticism on her authority as a governess. Courtney Mills considers her as an 'abstract' power who is incapable of exerting any influence on the girls which further allows Aileen Douglas to assume Miss Jenny Peace as a 'second governess' or an 'affectionate governess'.[154] Moyra Haslett, on the other hand, regards Mrs Teachum's punishment as 'completely ineffectual'.[155] I argue instead that Mrs Teachum's

[153] Christopher D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding,* First Ed. (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2017), p. 121.
[154] Courtney A. Weikle-Mills, '"Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship."' *Early American Literature*, 43 (2008), pp. 35–61; Aileen Douglas, 'Women, Enlightenment and the Literary Fairy Tale in English', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 38 (2015), pp. 181-94.
[155] Moyra Haslett, 'All pent up together: Representations of Friendship in Fictions of Girls' Boarding-Schools, 1680-1800', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 41 (2018), pp. 81-99.

punishment isn't ineffective as it provides an opportunity for self-analysis to the girls who remain unknown to this objective of their governess. Sarah Fielding was against corporal punishments and Jane Collier explained to Richardson in a letter how it was necessary to keep readers uninformed about Mrs Teachum's punishments in *The Governess.*[156] The letter, discussed in detail later in the chapter, explains how Mrs Teachum's larger plan unfolds and how she incorporates her style of punishment as the first step towards achieving her objective of teaching interpretative skills to the girls. Mrs Teachum's next step in her objective is to refrain herself from unnecessary involvement with the girls in order to observe and instruct as an impartial governess. Critics criticize Mrs Teachum for being absent in the novel but are unable to recognize her absence as a constituent of her larger plan consciously decided upon to fulfil her objective. Therefore, whereas Courtney Mills and Aileen Douglas analyse Mrs Teachum's character on the basis of the number of appearances she makes in the novel I argue that the instructions delivered during those limited appearances provide a clearer picture of Mrs Teachum's character and her role as a governess.[157]

The central argument of this chapter is also explored through the character of Miss Jenny Peace. She receives great admiration from critics, but this chapter suggests that her position at the academy is equivalent to that of any other student under Mrs Teachum's guidance. Mika Suzuki explores the reader-writer relationship in the works of Sarah Fielding and concludes the role of Mrs Teachum as secondary to Miss Jenny's. She writes, 'The role of the governess is fortified. Sarah Fielding's Jenny Peace was the person who brought about

[156] Martin Battestin and Clive Probyn, *The Correspondence,* p. 124.

[157] My interpretation of Mrs Teachum's absence is also reflected in my analysis of the characteristics of Smith's prudent man from *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Adam Smith writes that 'The propriety of our moral sentiments is never so apt to be corrupted […] while the impartial one is at a great distance.' As Mrs Teachum consciously chooses to maintain sufficient distance from the girls in order to remain an impartial judge of their characters, her absence, therefore, is justified. I explore similarities between Sarah Fielding's and Adam Smith's views on the education of children at the end of this chapter. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* edited by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 154.

the girls' reconciliation by persuading them to consider rationally.'[158] I argue instead that Jenny acts only after receiving instructions from Mrs Teachum, therefore, the reconciliation in reality is a result of Mrs Teachum's teaching style and not of Jenny's extraordinary intellect. Deborah Downs-Miers goes even further in her admiration for Jenny and praises her teaching style for being similar to Socrates. She writes, 'Jenny returns to her friends on Tuesday and begins her role of Socrates, teaching them by asking questions using what the governess has taught her about the proper use of reading.'[159] Miers agrees that Jenny's actions proceed from the instructions of Mrs Teachum but fails to acknowledge Jenny's incapability in providing original observations of her own. We witness this when Mrs Teachum asks her to derive a moral from the play she had just finished reading. The question leaves her stupefied and Jenny provides an answer similar to Mrs Teachum's earlier observations regarding fairy tales. Therefore, promoting Jenny to the level of a governess and ascribing to her all the credit for reforming the girls at the academy by turning a blind eye towards her immature and developing interpretative skills is an incomplete analysis of her character which this chapter aims to present in detail. The comparison established by Miers between Jenny and Socrates is noteworthy and I intend to extend this observation by presenting similarities between *The Governess* (1749) and Fielding's translation of Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* (1762) in order to support and strengthen my understanding of interpretation in this chapter. Fielding's translation of *Memoirs* helps in establishing the influence of Socratic philosophy in the construction of an educational method which focuses on critical interpretation, which is presented in *The Governess*. The studies of Sarah Fielding by Miers, Suzuki and Carpenter mentioned above do not present any such similarities.

[158] Mika Suzuki, 'The true use of reading: Sarah Fielding and mid eighteenth-century literary strategies' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of London, 1998), p. 242.
[159] Deborah Downs-Miers, 'Labyrinths of the Mind: A Study of Sarah Fielding', (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1975), p. 57.

SARAH FIELDING AND *THE GOVERNESS: OR THE LITTLE FEMALE ACADEMY* (1749)

An unconventional writer whose works place her in the ranks of feminists such as Mary Astell and educationalists such as John Locke Sarah Fielding's (1710-1768) life and work has received less focused attention. Martin C. Battestin's and Clive T. Probyn's collection of the correspondence of Sarah Fielding along-with Anna Laetitia Barbauld's collection of the correspondence of Samuel Richardson provide a microcosmic account of her biography.[160] The letters help us in understanding Fielding's friendship with the Colliers who encouraged and helped her in her writings, as well as her intellectual affection and admiration for Samuel Richardson. The most important account that the letters provide is Fielding's literary development as a sentimentalist which helps in developing my argument for *The Governess.* In one of the letters to Richardson she writes,

> Methinks, in such a house, each word that is uttered must sink into the nearer's mind, as the kindly falling showers in April sink into the teeming earth and enlarge and ripen every idea, as those friendly drops do the new-sown grain, or the water-wanting plant.[161]

Sarah Fielding's unique style of using nature and natural surroundings as an expression of her feelings justifies the emphasis on imagination she puts in *The Governess.* An essay by Battestin on the relationship between Henry and Sarah provides detail on Fielding's childhood.[162] It explores Sarah's intellectual and literary development from the time she started contributing in her brother's works. Other historians such as Roy Porter present a more discreet information on Richardson's influence on Sarah. He writes that Fielding read

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[160] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).
[161] Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson.* Vol.2, Printed for R. Phillips by Lewis and Rodem, (1804).
[162] Martin C. Battestin, '"Henry Fielding and Sarah Fielding and "the Dreadful Sin of Incest"', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction,* 13 (1979), pp. 6-18.

Clarissa as a 'personal acquaintance' which helped her in understanding the importance and effects of characterization on readers.[163] Together these works help build a critical understanding of Sarah Fielding's life and her career as a writer and ultimately assist in my analysis of *The Governess.*

The educational method that underpins *The Governess* with its focus on an institutional context that works to develop the imagination and interpretative abilities of its students draws on Fielding's own experience of education, both at school and via the friendships she developed as a young woman. Sarah Fielding's childhood saw the death of her mother and witnessed separation from a flamboyant father at the age of nine. Following this separation Fielding's maternal grandmother took the responsibility for her education (alongside the other Fielding children) and sent her to Mary Rooke's Boarding School, a non-academic institution in Salisbury. The school and its governess Mrs Rooke are often considered as an inspiration for Mrs Teachum's academy in *The Governess* but the type of education provided differentiates the two. Christopher Johnson writes, 'The curriculum at Mrs Rooke's school, at least as it was described by Edmund's servant Frances Barber, does not appear quite as intellectually challenging- and ultimately liberating- as the one created by the fictional Mrs Teachum.'[164] The academic education at Mrs Rooke's school was limited to teaching French and thus lacked the possibility of providing any professional opportunity to Sarah contrary to her brother's education from Eton. Irrespective of the difference in education, Sarah's literary career was initiated with the encouragement from her friends in Salisbury and attained excellence under the mentorship of Samuel Richardson and James Harris as discussed below.

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[163] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World,* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 290.
[164] Christopher D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding,* First Ed. (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2017), p. 24.

In Salisbury Sarah became good friends with Jane Collier, her brother Arthur Collier and James Harris. Susan Staves observes that 'Arthur Collier, LL.D., an advocate in Doctor's Commons and the brother of Sarah's friend Jane Collier, acted as a casual tutor for Sarah in her pursuit of a competence in Latin and Greek during her time in London in the middle and late 1740s.'[165] Arthur Collier was a former friend of Henry Fielding and James Harris and had them involved in a court case in the 1740s. Sarah was residing with Henry at that time and eventually became Arthur's student in order to strengthen her knowledge of Greek and Latin.[166] The Colliers assisted not only in Sarah's education but also encouraged her to pursue writing. Sarah's first contribution was a three-paragraph letter (From Leonora to Horatio) in Henry Fielding's *The History and Adventures of Joseph Andrews* (1742) and in the following year she contributed the final chapter in Henry Fielding's *A Journey from This World to the Next* (1743). It was Jane Collier who encouraged Fielding to strike out on her own and thus Fielding published her first novel, *The Adventures of David Simple* in 1744. Following the publication of *The Governess* (discussed in greater detail below) Fielding and Collier worked together on *The Cry*, a novel that highlights the necessity of educating women. Staves writes, 'In Sarah's *Cry: A New Dramatic Fable* (1754), filled with references to classical texts, the principal heroine defends learning for women. Her every utterance is unremittingly attacked and ridiculed by a mob of ladies collectively called "The Cry".'[167]

James Harris, another close friend and mentor of Sarah, was 'a theorist of language, a classical scholar and in his later years, a member of parliament'.[168] He helped Sarah in the

[165] Susan Staves, 'The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding (review)', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 7 (1994), pp. 91-4.
[166] Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 'A Little Learning a Dangerous Thing?' *Language Sciences*, 22 (2000), pp. 339–58.
[167] Susan Staves, 'The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding (review)', pp. 91-4.
[168] Charles A. Knight writes of James Harris as 'a worthy example of intellectual gentry' in his exploration of Sarah Fielding's contemporary writers. Charles A. Knight, 'The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding' (review), *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 94 (1995), pp. 416-18.

translation of Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* which fulfilled her life-long interest in the Greek literature and the Socratic philosophy. The translation was published as *The Defence of Socrates before his Judges* in 1762. After acquiring a firm grip on the Greek language from Arthur Collier Sarah worked on the translation under the guidance of James Harris. In an exchange of letters from 1758 to 1762 Harris provided translations of certain paragraphs to Sarah which explained the beauty of *Memoirs* (one of the paragraphs translated by Harris is mentioned in my comparative analysis of *Memoirs and The Governess* below). He praises Xenophon's writing style which affects not only the mind but also the sentiments of the reader. On October 4, 1758, Sarah acknowledges Harris' remarks on Xenophon in his earlier work *Hermes* which was published in 1751. Harris writes, 'Xenophon, the Pattern of Perfect Simplicity; every where smooth, harmonious and pure; declining the figurative, the marvellous and the mystic; ascending but rarely in the Sublime; nor then so much trusting to the colours of Stile, as to the intrinsic dignity of the Sentiment itself.'[169] Such descriptions about the author of *Memoirs* by Harris advanced Sarah's interest in pursuing its translation and further understanding the Socratic philosophy. It also helps us in developing similarities between the ideals of Socrates in *Memoirs* and the ideals of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* later in the chapter.

Jane Collier also introduced Sarah to Samuel Richardson who was already in the headlines with Henry Fielding for the criticisms they provided on each other's works.[170] Sarah was greatly attracted to Richardson's style of writing and in a letter to him on January 8, 1748/9 writes, 'I flatter myself, that knowing how delighted, how overjoyed, I should have

[169] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 143.

[170] Henry, according to Richardson, copied the characters of *Pamela* (1740-41) into *Joseph Andrews* (1742) due to his own lack of imagination and creativity. He says that 'Before his Joseph Andrews (hints and names taken from that story, with a lewd and ungenerous engraftment) the poor man wrote without being read.' Peter Sabor, 'Richardson, Henry Fielding and Sarah Fielding', *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature*, (1740-1830), pp. 139-56.

been, with making your pen my master, you would have solicited him to have admitted me as his servant.'[171] In the same year as *The Governess* (1749) Sarah published *Remarks on Clarissa* as a critic and as an admirer which played 'a significant role in shaping Richardson's revisions and additions to *Clarissa* (1748).'[172] Roy Porter traces the development of the novel in the eighteenth century and mentions the effect *Clarissa* (1748) had on Sarah Fielding. One major change in the eighteenth-century novels was the art of characterization and *Clarissa* struck at the heart of its readers. 'Clarissa, noted Sarah Fielding, was treated like an intimate Acquaintance by all her readers.'[173] It helped Sarah understand the importance of characterization in order to have a greater impact on readers and it was one among many lessons she learnt from Richardson.

Richardson, too, acknowledged Fielding's intellect and praised her developing literary style to his friends. He writes to her on December 7, 1756 that 'Lady Bradshaigh […] knows my opinion of you, and of your writing powers.'[174] Fielding learnt the importance of proper characterization and chose not to follow Richardson's epistolary form. Richardson was not a sentimentalist and, according to Behrens, focussed largely on creating characters as 'religious instructors' with little scope for judgements or observations for his readers.[175] Sarah, on the other hand, focussed more on representing the passions and feelings of her fictional characters and allowed observations to be made on their actions usually by interpolating an omniscient narrator or a wiser character.[176] Aileen Douglas comments on the characters in

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[171] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 123.
[172] Peter Sabor, 'Introduction *to Remarks on Clarissa,* by Sarah Fielding, (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1985), pp. iii-x, cited in Michael Behrens, 'Sarah Fielding, Benevolent Heroism and the "True Christian Philosophy,' pp. 633-51.
[173] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World,* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 290.
[174] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 131.
[175] Michael Behrens, 'Sarah Fielding, Benevolent Heroism and the "True Christian Philosophy,' pp. 633-51.
[176] Emily C. Friedman differentiates the reading public of the eighteenth-century into 'potential readers' and 'fictional readers'. The latter read for amusement contrary to the former and Sarah Fielding's works attracted those potential readers. 'Potential misreaders are quickly redirected throughout the text, as they identify their reading practices in the fictional misreaders and, through those misreaders, find ways out of that reading.'

The Governess and writes, 'The efforts of Fielding's characters towards self-sufficiency and equanimity in the face of disappointment and loss are a prelude to personal autonomy and social efficacy.'[177] The art of characterization learnt from Richardson allowed Sarah to create Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* who presents her own educational method of teaching interpretative skills to children for self-sufficiency. Richardson did not admonish Fielding's emphasis on human feelings and sentiments in her works, instead exclaims 'What a knowledge of the human heart! Well might a critical judge of writing say, as he did to me, that your late brother's knowledge of it was not (fine writer as he was) comparable to your's.'[178] Richardson observed the changes and the development in her writing style from her first novel in 1744 to *The Governess* in 1749. He, thus, helped Sarah with the publication of *The Governess* after acknowledging and appreciating her ideas on education especially the teaching style and the moralistic lessons of Mrs Teachum.[179]

IMAGINATION AND INTERPRETATION: MRS TEACHUM'S TEACHING OBJECTIVE

Mrs Teachum, the governess of the academy and Fielding's central character in the novel observes a distant authority over the girls and is seen giving instructions to them only at the end of each chapter. She makes limited appearances but a critical exploration of her instructions justifies her absence. Until recently the role of Mrs Teachum has been characterized by critics as ineffective, as a substitute for patriarchal authority and as one that fades away in the novel's progression. I argue instead that Fielding's prime objective in

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Emily C. Friedman, 'Remarks on Richardson: Sarah Fielding and the Rational Reader,' *Eighteenth-century Fiction*, 22 (2009), pp. 309-26.

[177] Aileen Douglas, 'Women, Enlightenment and the Literary Fairy Tale in English', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 38 (2015), pp. 181-94.

[178] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 132.

[179] Richardson was greatly interested in the punishment Mrs Teachum delivers in chapter one and asked Fielding to elaborate on it in the novel. However, Jane Collier on October 4, 1748 explains to him in a letter the importance of keeping the readers uninformed about the punishment in view of Mrs Teachum's larger plan. The letter and Mrs Teachum's larger plan is discussed in the below sections.

creating Mrs Teachum is not to do with her physical presence in the novel but with the effect of the lessons she provides. Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* teaches from a distance in order to provide a sense of freedom to the girls for them to interpret any knowledge they receive but corrects them at the end if they fail to deduce a proper conclusion. Mika Suzuki considers Mrs Teachum as 'not a dominant figure' and also concludes that 'the main thread of the book consists not in the instructions the governess gives […] but in the making of a harmonious and sympathizing community of the girls through their realization and amendments of their own faults.'[180] Courtney Mills further explores the role of Mrs Teachum and writes, 'As preparation for the girls' eventual progression to textual governance, Mrs. Teachum appears briefly to correct them herself, but from the moment of their consent to her control, her authority has already become representational.'[181] Suzuki and Mills appreciate the development of a positive companionship among girls as they follow Miss Jenny who initiates the exchange of autobiographies at the academy; what these critics fail to acknowledge is that Miss Jenny's actions or guidance comes not from her own maturity but succeed from Mrs Teachum's instructions. The below paragraph explains Fielding's aim in *The Governess* and the following paragraphs explore Mrs Teachum's instructions on the importance of interpretation along-with Miss Jenny's failure at learning that skill.

Fielding dedicates *The Governess* to Mrs Poyntz and expresses her aim of teaching interpretative skills to young girls in order for them to develop benevolent passions into habits.[182] She writes,

> The design of the following sheets is to endeavour to cultivate an early Inclination to Benevolence and a Love of Virtue, in the

[180] Mika Suzuki, 'The Little Female Academy and The Governess', *Women's Writing*, 1 (1994), pp. 325-39.
[181] Courtney A. Weikle-Mills, '"Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship', *Early American Literature*, 43 (2008), pp. 35–61.
[182] Sarah Fielding's association with Stephen Poyntz remains unclear, but she mentions him to have inspired the design of the novel. In the dedication to Mrs Poyntz, Fielding writes, 'The Consideration, Madam, made me first hope, that a Design of this Nature, would not be unacceptable to you; and particularly, as this Scheme was, in a manner directed by Mr Poyntz.' Sarah Fielding, *The Governess*, p. 3.

> Minds of young Women, by trying to shew them, that their True Interest is concerned in cherishing and improving those amiable Dispositions into Habits; and in keeping down all rough and boisterous Passions; and that from this alone they can propose to themselves to arrive at true Happiness, in any of the Stations of Life allotted to the Female Character.[183]

In these lines Fielding asks young girls to be habitually benevolent and virtuous. In order to live a happy life it is necessary to keep boisterous passions in check and to develop an interest in acquiring knowledge from every available source. These lines also describe Fielding's intent on developing interpretative skills in girls by trying 'to shew them' the advantages of exercising benevolence and virtue. The ultimate advantage is happiness and if the girls become efficient in segregating virtues and morals in various sources of knowledge available to them, then happiness is 'allotted' to every 'station' of their 'Female Character'. The different 'station[s]' of the 'Female Character' refer to the different stages of her life in childhood, in adulthood and in old age. Fielding, however, does not provide a process or a solution for developing efficiency in segregating virtues and morals in the above lines. It only becomes clear to her 'young readers' after the perusal of *The Governess* that critical interpretation is that process.[184] The following paragraphs explore the theme of interpretation in *The Governess.* They present how Mrs Teachum instructs Miss Jenny Peace, the eldest student at the academy, to deliver proper interpretations of her fairy tales and the play to the girls. Fielding, thus, makes it clear in the above lines that happiness is the ultimate advantage of practicing benevolence and virtue, and Mrs Teachum in the novel works towards providing that advantage to the girls at her academy. Her instructions regarding fairy tales and plays constitutes her larger plan which is discussed below.

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[183] Ibid.

[184] Fielding addresses young readers in the preface to the novel which helps us in understanding that Mrs Teachum's instructions are applicable to both boys and girls. Ibid*,* p. iv.

As a recreational activity Miss Jenny reads two fairy tales to the girls. The first is "The Story of the Cruel Giant Barbarico, The Good Giant Benefico and The Little Pretty Dwarf Mignon". The story depicts the threatening character of Barbarico after he catches Fidus and torments him. On the other hand, we witness the kindness of Benefico who constantly helps the villagers. Both giants procure the products of their own planting as Barbarico is slaughtered by Benefico in the end and continues to live in harmony with the villagers. The second fairy tale exhibits the account of "The Princess Hebe". In the story Princess Hebe is driven out of her kingdom on account of her aunt's noxious desire to place her own daughter at the throne. Similarly, in some other kingdom Princess Sybella is driven away from her home (but with a magic wand as a gift from her father) on account of her mother's blind love for her second daughter. Sybella gets to know Hebe and helps her mother in regaining their kingdom, vis-à-vis, helping herself in recapturing her own kingdom from her sister Rozella.

The reading of fairy tales is considered as the major driving force in the transformation of the girls during which Mrs Teachum's absence raises criticism. The girls are unable to deduce a moral for themselves after listening to the first fairy tale of the giants. Miss Sukey is pleased with the decapitation of Barbarico, Miss Lucy is amazed with Mignon's fearlessness, Miss Dolly is happy to see the reunion of Fidus and Amata and so on.[185] The girls, therefore, are unable to interpret a moral until Miss Jenny asks them to focus on the wrong deeds of Barbarico that led to his demise. She asks them 'to consider the moral of the story, and what use they might make of it, instead of contending which was the prettiest part.'[186] The girls then all agree 'that certainly it was of no use to read, without understanding what they read.'[187] Thus, Miss Jenny's remark allows the girls to correct their

[185] Ibid, p. 35.
[186] Ibid, p. 36.
[187] Ibid, p. 35.

observations and teaches them to focus on the moral of the story rather than on certain parts of it. However, the critics fail to acknowledge in their appreciation of Miss Jenny's guidance that it is Mrs Teachum in the preceding chapter who asks Miss Jenny to convey the proper interpretations of her fairy tales to the girls; Jenny has no such intentions until Mrs Teachum instructs her to do so.

It is to be noted that Mrs Teachum's curriculum does not include the teaching of any fairy tales but she does not discards or refuses their perusal if it is deemed necessary in delivering instructions. She tries to interpret them and provides instructions on their proper reading for the acquisition of virtues and morals. The second important thing to be noted is that Miss Jenny reads the first fairy tale without Mrs Teachum's permission. When she hears of this from Miss Jenny on the next day, Mrs Teachum says, 'Let me observe to you (which I would have you communicate to your little friends) that giants, magic, fairies and all sorts of supernatural assistances in a story, are only introduced to amuse and divert […] by no means let the notion of giants or magic dwell upon your minds.'[188] Mrs Teachum explains that the attractive language and the fantastic elements employed by a writer in fairy tales serve as a superficial layer of amusement over moral lessons which can only be removed through critical interpretations of the tales. Carpenter in her description of Miss Jenny as 'an ideal young woman, who knows the importance of deriving meaning from reading', fails to acknowledge the fact that Jenny interprets the fairy tale a day after Mrs Teachum's instructions.[189] The next day Jenny says to the girls that 'you must follow the example of the giant Benefico, and do good with it; and when you are under any sufferings, like Mignon, you must patiently endure them till you can find a remedy.'[190] As a result, Miss Sukey

[188] Ibid, p. 34.
[189] Lissette F Carpenter, 'Sarah Fielding: A Mid-Century Link in Eighteenth-century Feminist Views', (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Texas A&M University, 1989).
[190] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 36.

recognizes her mistake of plotting revenge against any person who behaved badly towards her and narrates her autobiography. Therefore, Miss Sukey's change of heart seems a result of the instructions given by Miss Jenny on the next day but in reality is a result of Mrs Teachum's instructions to Miss Jenny on the day before.

The girls are unable to interpret a moral even from the second fairy tale but Jenny's negligence towards providing an interpretation of her own raises doubt on the credibility of praises she receives from the critics. When Miss Dolly is fascinated with 'Rozella's artful manner' in drawing 'the wisest girl into her snares' and Miss Sukey is uncomfortable at Rozella's inconsiderate attitude towards Hebe Miss Jenny is merely happy to witness some progress in the behaviour of the girls in comparison to their contention of interpretations after the first fairy tale. For this progress Courtney Mills identifies Jenny as 'another governess', Haslett applauds her mature behaviour and Brian McCrea credits the reformation of the girls entirely to the 'stories they share'.[191] However, the critics ignore not only Mrs Teachum's larger plan in granting permission to Miss Jenny to tell those fairy tales but also Jenny's failure in interpreting them herself. At supper Mrs Teachum provides an interpretation of the second fairy tale and says that 'no accident had any power to hurt Sybella, because she followed the paths of virtue, and kept her mind free from restless passions.'[192] Mrs Teachum's words here allude to Fielding's. In the dedication Fielding asks young girls to turn boisterous passions into benevolent habits and similarly Mrs Teachum instructs the girls at the academy to control their passions in order to attain virtue.[193] Contrary to the numerous critics who praise Miss Jenny Lynne Vallone appreciates Mrs Teachum and observes that her 'last words' make each girl 'recognize and perform her duties faithfully' which supports my

[191] Courtney A. Weikle-Mills, '"Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship', pp. 35–61; Moyra Haslett, 'All pent up together: Representations of Friendship in Fictions of Girls' Boarding-Schools, 1680-1800,' pp. 81-99; Brian McCrea, '*The Governess* (review)', pp. 197-98.
[192] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 82.
[193] See footnote 247.

argument on the importance of Mrs Teachum at the academy.[194] Therefore, it is Mrs Teachum and her instructions that provide an opportunity for the girls to reflect on their mistakes rather than Miss Jenny.

Mrs Teachum's emphasis on critical interpretation which is clear from her instructions on fairy tales extends to yet another form of literature read by the girls later in the novel and which includes the dramatic arts. Fielding incorporates a comic play, *The Funeral; or, Grief-a-la-mode* (1701) by Richard Steele in *The Governess.* Earlier studies of Sarah Fielding acknowledge her usage of Steele's play in the novel but only Johanna R.B. Tomlinson explores it in brief. She writes, 'By this training in right reading, the girls gain a defense against the possible seduction offered by emerging forms of print culture.'[195] Tomlinson observes that proper reading helps in identifying virtuous morals in the tempting dialogues of plays. In the ensuing eight lines of her analysis she explores the advice given by Mrs Teachum which, if followed, allows the girls to read a variety of literature. Adding to Tomlinson's analysis of the play I address other important issues such as Fielding's decision to use only the title of Richard Steele's play and to exclude its text in the novel, Mrs Teachum's instructions to the girls about plays, Miss Jenny's incapability in providing any interpretation of the play and Fielding's unsuccessful attempts at writing effective plays of her own irrespective of an extensive knowledge of the genre.

J. Allanson Picton provides a brief sketch of Richard Steele's life as a playwright and describes how necessary it became for him to write a comedy after presenting 'strong religious feeling' in *The Christian Hero* (1701).[196] He was accused of being a Puritan and

[194] Lynne Vallone, 'The Crisis of Education: Eighteenth-Century Adolescent Fiction for Girls', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 14 (1989), pp. 63-7.
[195] Johanna R.B. Tomlinson, 'Playing With Words: Child Voices in British Fantasy Literature 1749-1906', (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Iowa, 2014), p. 46.
[196] J. A. Picton, 'Richard Steele', *Good Words*, 30 (1889), pp. 736-41, p. 738.

'was soon reckoned a disagreeable fellow'.[197] In order to clear his name he wrote *The Funeral* in the same year which brought him immense success and removed all the accusations. The play presents themes of 'Simplicity of Mind, Good-nature, Friendship and Honour' as observed by George Sherburn.[198] However, Fielding only provides a summary of the play in *The Governess* which presents it as a tragedy rather than a comedy, irrespective of its accuracy. Miss Sukey explains that *The Funeral* is the story of a servant named Trusty who helps his master, Lord Brumpton, see the wickedness of his wife in declaring him dead whilst he was alive. Lady Brumpton initially contrives a plan with her former husband to marry Lord Brumpton and to acquire his wealth after his death. However, their designs are altered by Trusty who catches the former husband in a conversation with Lady Brumpton and later derives a confession from him. Lord Brumpton is made to watch from behind a curtain as Trusty brings the former husband on stage and confronts Lady Brumpton with the truth. Being caught Lady Brumpton flees the scene with her husband and Lord Brumpton rejoices in the marriage of his son, Lord Hardy, with a fine lady named Charlotte.

Fielding's decision to exclude the play text from the novel might be understood in relation to its doubtful cultural status in the eighteenth century. Robert Hume writes,

> A performance did not consist of one comedy or tragedy viewed in decorous silence. People came, wandered about and left; those who stayed bought refreshments and talked. Many of the mainpieces were not comedy or tragedy but musical. Most nights included an afterpiece as well as a mainpiece and a great many nights featured interpolated entertainments of various sorts- song, dance, spectacle.[199]

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[197] Ibid.

[198] George Sherburn, *A Literary History of England: Vol. 3: The Restoration and Eighteenth-century (1660-1789)*, 2nd ed., (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 137.

[199] Robert Hume, 'Drama and Theatre in the Mid and Later Eighteenth-century,' *The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1660–1780*, edited by John Richetti, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 316–39.

Theatres, according to Hume, provided a place to people of all classes for sociability and gossip. Monetary ambitions of playwrights in early eighteenth century degraded the reputation of theatre by producing inconsequential plays which in turn developed the audience's negligence towards it.[200] Asa Briggs further writes that 'the audience was often boisterous' and 'not interested exclusively in what happened on stage.'[201] Theatres, then, served as places of amusement rather than of instruction. Richardson, too, felt that it wasn't as much the people's fault as it was the playwrights' and comments that 'A good Dramatick Writer is a Character that this Age knows nothing of; and I would be glad to name the Person living who is fit to be made an exception to this general Censure.'[202] As an admirer of Richardson, Fielding may well have been influenced by his views on theatre and instructs her readers in *The Governess* to abstain from reading plays. She explains in the novel that without the proper guidance of an instructor reading plays can render a harmful influence on children.

As it has been mentioned earlier that Steele wrote *The Funeral* (1701) in order to clear people's misinterpretation of *The Christian Hero* (1701) as a Puritan play yet his presentation of Christian beliefs in the play supposedly provide a minor reason to understand Fielding's exclusion of *The Funeral's* play text in *The Governess* (1749). Sherburn observes that, according to Steele, 'Under the Christian dispensation the passions are serviceable: love of fame stimulates us to great actions and conscience directs our acts to be useful to God and Man- all with the hope of ultimate reward in heaven.'[203] Steele's argument on human 'acts' revolves around two subjects which contradict Fielding's message in *The Governess.*

[200] George Sherburn writes, 'The comedy of the eighteenth-century was written by authors who would stoop to allow mere actors to revise and reshape their work; and that meant that frequently it was by men and women writing for money.' George Sherburn, *A Literary History of England,* p. 138.
[201] Asa Briggs, *How They Lived,* p. 230.
[202] Darryl Domingo, 'Richardson's Unfamiliar Quotations: "Clarissa" and Early Eighteenth-Century Comedy', *Review of English Studies*, 66 (2015), pp. 936–53.
[203] George Sherburn, *A Literary History of England*, p. 137.

According to Steele, fame and salvation ('ultimate reward') act as motivational catalysts for human actions, whereas Fielding via Mrs Teachum teaches the girls to neither be attracted towards fame (represented through the death of the giant Barbarico in the first fairy tale and Rozella's downfall in the second fairy tale) nor includes the study of Christianity at the academy (discussed below). Hence, witnessing a contradiction with her own beliefs, Fielding chooses to merely use the title of Steele's play, *The Funeral or Grief-a-la-mode,* in her educational novel for children and provides instructions through Mrs Teachum for its critical interpretation.

Mrs Teachum is an educator who 'explicitly corrects her students' thinking and behaviour' and tries to inculcate critical interpretative skills in the pursuit of knowledge.[204] Similar to fairy tales, she considers the reading of plays without proper supervision as a harmful influence on children. She explains to the girls that,

> Where that moral is not to be found, the writer will have it to answer for, that he has been guilty of one of the worst of evils; namely, that he has clothed vice in so beautiful a dress, that instead of deterring, it will allure and draw into its snares the young and tender mind. And I am sorry to say, that too many of our dramatic performances are of this latter cast.[205]

Irrespective of moralistic endings, the explicit presentation of vice in plays has harmful influence on children. This, according to Mrs Teachum, is the result of a playwright's insensitiveness towards his audience. Fielding, thus, excludes the play from the novel in order to protect her own readers from its useless amusement and tempting dialogues. Mrs Teachum criticizes playwrights for their writing styles which entrap young and tender minds towards vice because of their inability to present virtues more explicitly than their representation of vice in tempting dialogues. Miss Sukey's summary of *The Funeral* provides a perfect

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[204] Jameela Lares, 'Written Maternal Authority and Eighteenth-Century Education in Britain: Educating by the Book, by Rebecca Davies', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 40 (2015), pp. 298-300.
[205] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* pp. 94-5.

example. After Miss Sukey finishes Mrs Teachum once again lays emphasis on critical interpretation and says that 'you forgot to describe what sort of women those two young ladies were, though, as to all the rest, you have been particular enough.'[206] Mrs Teachum instructs her to focus more on analysing characters rather than being amused with the events of a story. To the other girls she says,

> Moral does not arise only from the happy turn in favour of the virtuous characters in the conclusion of the play, but is strongly inculcated, as you see along, in the peace of mind that attends the virtuous, even in the midst of oppression and distress, while the event is yet doubtful and apparently against them; and on the contrary, in the confusion of mind which the vicious are tormented with, even whilst they falsely imagine themselves triumphant.[207]

Mrs Teachum here explains that happiness and peace of mind come not as a result of happy endings but as a result of constant virtue. She also explains that momentary success can never bring permanent happiness as experienced by Lady Brumpton in the play. Mrs Teachum instructs the girls to interpret Trusty's loyalty and honesty as virtuous characteristics that lead to happiness and success. Her instructions and authority, however, suffer another blow from critics such as Courtney Mills or Aileen Douglas who deem Miss Jenny's interpretation of the play as an example of her extraordinary intellect. I argue instead that Miss Jenny's incapability to understand and derive an original interpretation of her own justifies her initial hesitation in providing a moral from the play to Mrs Teachum.

Mrs Teachum's message is clear through her analysis of the play but critics favour Miss Jenny for her interpretation. Mills considers that 'Jenny Peace comes to stand in for Teachum as an affectionate governess' whereas Douglas praises her for achieving the transformation of the girls.[208] She writes, 'The action of the novel shows how Jenny, over the

[206] Ibid, p. 92.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Courtney A. Weikle-Mills, '"Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship', pp. 35-61.

course of nine days, manages to transform the school into a place of calm benevolence.'[209] I argue instead that irrespective of being the eldest and the wisest amongst the girls Miss Jenny simply obeys Mrs Teachum's instructions and follows her interpretations. Furthermore, she is far behind than the other girls who have learnt to develop some skill of interpretation.

When Mrs Teachum asks Miss Jenny to deliver a moral from the play, Fielding writes,

> Miss Jenny being thus suddenly asked a question of this nature, considered some time before she gave an answer; for she was naturally very different of her own opinion in anything where she had not been instructed by someone she thought wiser than herself.[210]

These lines highlight Miss Jenny's lack of self-confidence. She considers her opinions unworthy in the presence of a wiser person than herself. Through these lines we understand that Miss Jenny is an exemplary student capable of understanding and remembering morals taught to her but at the same time she is a failure at developing an interpretative mind. She replies to Mrs Teachum that 'The author intended to prove what my good mamma first taught me and what you, madam, since have so strongly confirmed me in.'[211] Miss Jenny declares that she understands the observation made by Mrs Teachum on the play and considers Lord Hardy's innocence as an ultimate virtue. However, Mrs Teachum's observation in the previous paragraph and the lesson she wishes the girls to learn is duly interpreted by Miss Dolly who says that 'Nay, I had rather have been old Trusty, with all the infirmities of age, following my Lord Hardy through the world, had his poverty and distress been ever so great.'[212] Therefore, Mrs Teachum's ultimate objective of teaching interpretative skills to her students in order for them to become efficient in choosing the best for themselves is duly

[209] Aileen Douglas, 'Women, Enlightenment and the Literary Fairy Tale in English', pp. 181-94.
[210] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess*, p. 92.
[211] Ibid, p. 93.
[212] Ibid, p. 95.

understood by Miss Dolly and not by Miss Jenny. Hence, Jenny sets herself as a follower and not a leader. She cannot exert any authority over the girls because she lacks an imaginative and interpretative mind to achieve a certain objective as is done by Mrs Teachum. Furthermore, she cannot be named as a subordinate to Mrs Teachum in teaching morals to the girls because her position of a monitor at the academy comes as a result of her being the eldest and Mrs Teachum's larger plan of making the other girls comfortable in the company of one of their own.[213] Therefore, Mrs Teachum's distant authority reflected in her style of punishment, her instructions on the reading of fairy tales and plays and her placement of Miss Jenny as the monitor of the class are the true reasons behind the girls' transformation and them learning the skill of interpretation.

Mrs Teachum's larger plan of teaching interpretative skills to the girls is initially formulated after the girls fail to comprehend her punishment in chapter one of *The Governess.* Mrs Teachum is an ideal instructor who dedicates her life to the betterment of children at her academy and is often compared with Locke's educator in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693).[214] Brian McCrea suggests that *The Governess* has its 'sources in Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education'* and Warren Wooden emphasizes that 'Rational Moralists including Sarah Fielding […] were under the influence of Locke.'[215]

[213] The other girls put their confidence in Miss Jenny who is already employed by Mrs Teachum to provide an everyday account of their conversations. It places Miss Jenny as a monitor of the class and not as Mrs Teachum's subordinate.

[214] The comparison is also sometimes made with Rousseau's *Emile; or On Education* (1762), but since *The Governess* (1749) is published twelve years earlier, its influence on the French philosopher seems more likely. Arlene Wilner observes the same and writes that Rousseau picks up after Locke on the education of children but 'there is no reason to claim *The Governess* as a source for Rousseau'. Arlene Fish Wilner, 'Education and Ideology in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 24 (1995), pp. 307-27. Rousseau lays emphasis on restriction contrary to Locke or Fielding when he writes, 'With children use force, with men reason; such is the natural order of things […] There is no more, is an answer against which no child ever rebelled unless he believed it untrue.' Rousseau, *Emile; or Concerning Education,* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1889), pp. 53-55.

[215] Brian McCrea, '*The Governess* (review)', pp. 197-98; Warren W. Wooden, 'Classics of Children's Literature and: From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850 (review)', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 7 (1982), pp. 62-3.

When Locke writes that 'He that has found a way how to keep up a child's spirit, easy, active and free; and yet at the same time to restrain him from many things he has a mind to […] has in my opinion, got the true secret of education', Mrs Teachum ideally personifies his educator.[216] Locke's views help us in establishing further differences and, at the same time, similarities between the two educators but the focus here is on their different styles of punishing children. Both educators agree that punishment for wrong deeds is as important as appreciations for good actions. According to Locke, love must follow punishment for the former to be effective. He writes that 'Fear and awe ought to give you the first power over their minds and love and friendship in riper years to hold it'.[217] Therefore, it is necessary for an ideal educator to develop friendship with the student in order to have a deeper effect of his lessons but Fielding proposes a different method. Unlike the appreciations and friendships of Locke's educator with his students Fielding's Mrs Teachum distances herself from the girls after delivering the punishment in *The Governess* in order to provide an opportunity for them to assess their actions themselves and learn.

The only punishment inflicted by Mrs Teachum occurs in the first chapter of the novel when the girls fight over an apple and are bereft of being entertained with any amusements in the future until they prove their worth. The punishment, however, is not mentioned. Fielding only writes, 'But this is certain, the most severe punishment she had ever inflicted on any misses, since she had kept a school, was now laid on these wicked girls.'[218] Before publishing *The Governess* Richardson insisted Fielding to describe the punishment but Jane Collier explained to him the importance of this omission in a letter on October 4, 1748.[219] She writes,

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[216] Postulate 46 in Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education,* ed. by John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 112.
[217] Ibid, p. 110.
[218] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 7.
[219] Johnson explores the reader-writer relationship in this letter but focuses more on Fielding's unconventional writing style in order to reach a wider audience in the eighteenth-century. However, he misses a more severe message which Collier highlights through this letter and which justifies my exploration of imagination as

> I think, rather better that the girls (her readers) should not know what this punishment was that Mrs Teachum inflicts; but they should each, on reading it, think it to be the same that they themselves had suffered when they deserved it; for though Miss Fielding is an enemy to corporeal severities, yet there is no occasion that she should teach the children so punished that their punishment is wrong.[220]

Collier in these lines hints towards Fielding's design of a teacher's teaching methods. She explains that punishment should only be inflicted on children when they are capable of understanding its justification. Irrespective of Mrs Teachum taking away the apples from the girls and making them embrace one another, the girls continue with a 'grudge and ill-will in their bosoms; everyone thinking she was punished most, although she would have it, that she deserved to be punished least.'[221] This makes it clear that the girls turn a blind eye toward their own mistakes and are equally incapable of comprehending Mrs Teachum's punishment for its future benefit. It is for the same reason that Jane Collier justifies the omission of Mrs Teachum's punishment in the novel. The readers must interpret, according to her, its necessity along-with the girls in the academy through the lessons of Mrs Teachum.

The effect and the objective of the punishment becomes clear when we observe Mrs Teachum's actions in the following chapters of the novel. After Miss Jenny reads the first fairy tale to the girls Mrs Teachum asks her to provide an everyday account of their time spent in the arbour 'with a desire to know their different dispositions' and to correct them before they leave the academy.[222] Her instructions on fairy tales and plays, thus, forms her larger plan and the readers along-with the girls at the academy are instructed to interpret them critically. This provides an opportunity for Courtney Mills, Aileen Douglas or Moyra Haslett

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Fielding's prime objective in *The Governess.* He writes, 'As a writer living by her pen, Fielding no doubt saw writing for children as a profitable opportunity. A letter from Jane Collier to Richardson demonstrates the degree to which Fielding and her circle were becoming savvy to the dynamics of marketplace.' Christopher D. Johnson, *A Political Biography of Sarah Fielding*, p. 111.

[220] Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson.* Vol.2, Printed for R. Phillips by Lewis and Rodem, (1804).

[221] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 7.

[222] Ibid, p. 39.

to admire Miss Jenny for providing those interpretations to the girls. However, Miss Jenny confesses in the end that she was monitoring their amusements and was put in that place by her governess. Before she departs she says to the girls that Mrs Teachum 'will direct who shall preside over your innocent amusements in my place.'[223] Jenny explains that the next monitor will also be 'directed' by Mrs Teachum for the benefit of the girls at the academy. Hence, her entitlement as 'another governess' by Mills is in reality a work of Mrs Teachum and her larger plan. It is to be noted that Mrs Teachum executed the entire plan of teaching interpretative skills in order to make the girls review their past mistakes and finally understand the objective of her punishment because she says to Miss Jenny that 'She herself had only waited a little while, to see if their anger would subside and love take its place in their bosoms, without her interfering again.'[224]

CRITICAL INTERPRETATION: THE SOCRATIC INFLUENCE ON SARAH FIELDING

Sarah Fielding's interest in theatre is a result of her extensive reading of Shakespeare, Joseph Addison, Richard Steele and David Garrick.[225] Another major influence comes from her own brother who intended 'to build a theatre of his own in 1737'.[226] Fielding, thus, tries her hand at writing plays before and after the publication of *The Governess* but soon realizes her 'lack' of efficiency in the genre from the famous actor and theatre manager, David Garrick.[227] In a

[223] Ibid, p. 109.
[224] Ibid p. 20.
[225] In her correspondence Sarah uses lines from Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603) and *Measure for Measure* (1603/4). *The Governess'* title page, too, has lines taken from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595/6). Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 140, 149.
[226] George Sherburn explores the life of Henry Fielding as a playwright and writes, 'The best comedies of the thirties are burlesques or political satires (or both). Fielding was the premier comic dramatist and though his 'serious' efforts are far from first-rate, his irregular plays are brilliant. *The Author's Farce* (1730) mocks the world of Grub Street; *Tom Thumb* (1730) travesties heroic drama quite hilariously; *Pasquin* (1735) and *The Historical Register* (1737) are chaotically funny smears on major political and literary figures from Colley Cibber to Sir Robert Walpole'. George Sherburn, *A Literary History of England*, p. 320.
[227] 'Garrick, Macklin and Foote were star actors and that Garrick, Colman and Foote were important managers. They made a lot of money from their plays, but they were creating vehicles for themselves and their

letter to Fielding on May/June 1754 Garrick comments on a play which was sent by Sarah Fielding for his perusal and says that

> There are good things I confess and apt for ye Times; but there wants a dramatic spirit and the scenes are too long, but that is easily remedied. These might be made to do, provided they were connected with a little interesting plan, the necessity of which we talked over before.[228]

The play sent by Fielding is not mentioned in *The Correspondence* but Garrick' emphasis on the want of a 'dramatic spirit' and an 'interesting plan' in the letter allows us to understand Fielding's unsuccessful attempts at writing effective plays. However, her efforts were not in vain as they advanced her interest in the Socratic philosophy which was mentioned earlier in this chapter. The transition from writing novels to attempting plays to pursuing classical translations is a recurring event in the life of Sarah Fielding. She learnt Greek and Latin from Arthur Collier and William Young in the 1740s but Henry's sarcastic comments on her growing intellect temporarily side-lined the pursuit of her classical interests. In the early 1750s she attempted writing plays but to her disappointment. The immediate success of Elizabeth's Carter's translation of Arrian's *Discourses of Epictetus and Enchiridion* in 1758 re-ignited her former interest in the classics and finally she pursued her own translation of Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* and completed it in 1762.[229] It is also to be noted that Sarah Fielding wrote various novels from 1744 to 1760.[230] Therefore, Fielding's translation of Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* fulfilled her life-long interest in the Socratic philosophy.

Although they represent three different genres of literature, Fielding's transition from one to the other prepares a common ground for exploring the formulation of her educational

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companies and with the arguable exception of Macklin these people were more dramatic carpenters than playwrights per se.' Robert Hume, 'Drama and Theatre in the Mid and Later Eighteenth-century', pp. 316–39.

[228] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 126.

[229] See footnote 140 in the introduction to this thesis.

[230] For a detail understanding of Fielding's other works read Sylvia Kasey Marks' 'Sarah Fielding's *The Governess:* A Gloss on Her Books upon Education', *Women, Gender and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Essays in Memory of Betty Rizzo*, Bethlehem, (PA: Lehigh UP), pp. 59-78.

method of improving students' interpretative skills in this chapter. The below section explores the importance and influence of classical literature on Sarah Fielding. It presents similarities between the ideals of Socrates in the *Memoirs of Socrates* (translated by Fielding in 1762) and the ideals of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1749). Mrs Teachum is highly compared with Locke's ideal educator but the influence of the Greek authors such as Socrates or Epictetus on Fielding establishes her educational method as one that retraces the ideals of the classics.[231]

Fielding's message through *The Governess* is to discriminate amongst the images and ideas which we permit into our minds. The novel presents her educational method of critically interpreting texts and experiences in order to find their moral lessons. Furthermore, the unique teaching style of teachers such as Mrs Teachum play a significant role in acquiring this attitude towards any given knowledge. In every chapter of *The Governess* (1749) Fielding instructs her young readers and the girls at Mrs Teachum's academy to critically interpret books for the acquisition of virtues. However, Fielding's emphasis on interpretation in *The Governess* is the result of her interest in Socratic philosophy which is also visible in her translation of Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates* (1762). Mika Suzuki's exploration of Fielding's classical knowledge criticizes her translation as a financial project which fails to express her ideals on education or on women unlike her earlier novels. She writes, 'In publishing a translation she made less use of her sensitiveness to the tastes and requirements of her audience than when she wrote fiction. Her sense of the need to negotiate with the

[231] Mrs Teachum's method of teaching is similar to Plato's when he writes in point 537a in Book-7 in *The Republic* that 'Do not train a child to learn by force or harshness; but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.' *The Republic,* edited by Benjamin Jowett, (Auckland: Floating Press, 2009), p. 522. Fielding also mentions Epictetus in *Memoirs* from Carter's translation for his metaphorical definition of the school of a philosopher as similar to a surgical operation. Sarah Fielding, *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates. With the Defence of Socrates, before His Judge,* Printed by John Exshaw, (Dublin, 1778), p. 244.

reader is suspended in her project of translation.'[232] Originally composed by Xenophon as *Memorabilia* in 371 BC, I argue instead that the translation is a long-awaited project of Sarah Fielding's academic interest in the classics which would have been completed before the publication of *The Governess* in 1749 if not for her brother's envy towards her growing intellect. Her letter to James Harris on September 21, 1758 hints at the ridicule faced by her in the 1740s from her brother, a period when she was in the prime of her learning and was increasing her knowledge of Greek and Latin from Arthur Collier and William Young.[233] She writes,

> I am much obliged to you for the Favour of yours, and am very glad you have found your Xenophon, nor shall I look upon it at all in the Light of a Trifle, tho you are so polite as to call it so, but shall be very thankfull for it, and more especially as in my present State of Doubt, whether it is possible at my Time of Life, to make any thing of the Greek Language; I dont love to enquire for greek Books; but it has always been my Maxim to have the least Fear of Redicule wherever real Knowledge dwells, which directed me to mention this Affair only to you.[234]

James Harris was delayed in providing Sarah with a copy of his *Xenophon* in order for her to read and make some observations before she put pen to paper. The final lines in the above letter reflect a loss of interest in the classics for Fielding as a result of the 'redicule' she faced in the pursuit of 'real Knowledge' at the start of her literary career. Her description of Socratic philosophy as the 'real knowledge' allows us to understand her approbation and admiration for it. However, with the help of James Harris she completed the translation in 1762. *The Governess* comes almost in the middle of Fielding's classical journey which began in 1742 and ended in 1762. Therefore, the ideals of Mrs Teachum and the educational method presented in *The Governess* which aims at improving students' interpretative skills are a

[232] Mika Suzuki, 'The true use of reading: Sarah Fielding and mid eighteenth-century literary strategies' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of London, 1998), p. 309.
[233] Sarah was living with her brother in the 1740s and had helped Henry with *Joseph Andrews* in 1742. In the following years she became acquainted with William Young and studied Greek and Latin from him.
[234] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence*, p. 141.

result of Fielding's inclination towards the ideals of Socrates. As it has been mentioned earlier that Arthur Collier and William Young helped Sarah in learning Greek and Latin in the 1740s, what follows explains how the lessons of Socrates in *Memorabilia* and Fielding's journey in writing its translation influenced the formulation of her educational method which is presented in *The Governess* and how that method is criticized as a utopian idea.

The translation by Fielding allows us to view the objectives of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* and of Socrates in *Memoirs* under the same lens and establishes the importance of developing an interpretative mind in children. There are various similarities between *The Governess* and *Memoirs* such as Mrs Teachum's pursuit of virtue, her pedagogy, the characteristics of a true friend and a true companionship.[235] However, I present here examples that clearly establish the development of an interpretative mind in children to be the sole purpose of Socrates and of Mrs Teachum and how their views on religion help in the development of my argument on critical interpretation.

In *Memoirs* Socrates defends himself against the accusations of corrupting the youth and says that 'It is a maxim with those who instruct youth to regard the exercises that are gone through with ease; or give pleasure on their first performance, as of little worth; whether in forming the body, or improving the mind.'[236] Socrates' description of the teaching methods of an ideal instructor is similar to Mrs Teachum's lesson in interpreting every knowledge carefully and critically.[237] He explains that it is an essential requisite of an ideal educator to never allow his students any freedom of satisfaction with their performances or learning in order for them to accomplish something better than their former attempts and to develop

[235] Major similarities are visible in Book-1 and 2. See pages 8, 10, 31, 35 and 47 where Socrates explains the repercussions of selfish passions which remind us of the follies of the girls at Mrs Teachum's academy and his lessons as similar to Mrs Teachum's. Sarah Fielding, *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates,* (Dublin: 1778).
[236] Ibid*,* p. 87.
[237] It is to be noted that the ideals of Socrates do not allude to Sarah Fielding's in reality. It is vice-versa. Fielding published *Memoirs of Socrates* in 1762 after *The Governess* in 1749. Therefore, the ideals of Socrates in her *Memoirs* remind us of the ideals of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* and allows us to develop a similarity.

further excellence. Mrs Teachum in a similar fashion tries to instil the skill of critical interpretation in her students. She instructs them to interpret every fairy tale and play they read for a virtuous moral instead of giving wing to their imaginations for mere amusements. At another point in the translation Fielding explains Socrates' views on the importance of studying human affairs over studying the Divine. She writes,

> On the contrary, he demonstrated the follies of those who busied themselves much in such fruitless disquisitions; asking, whether they thought they were already sufficiently instructed in *human affairs*, that they undertook, only, to meditate on *divine*? Or, if passing over the *first and* confining their enquiries altogether to the *latter*, they appeared even to themselves, to act wisely and as became *men*.[238]

Fielding through these lines explains that it is necessary for the citizens of a society to study, understand and act in proper manners in order to build virtuous and healthy relationships. She continues to explain that we should not concern and devote ourselves solely to the Divine. Seeking answers from God by spending all the available time in meditation exposes oneself as not only useless in executing one's duties as a citizen but also a fool. Fielding presents the same in *The Governess* through Mrs Teachum who teaches the girls to pray and thank God only in the morning and at the night in the form of a short prayer, but nowhere in the novel does her teaching instructs them to seek or act in fear of God.[239]

Mrs Teachum's curriculum is not precisely elaborated by Fielding in the novel but is provided in the form of hints which are spread throughout.[240] She allows Miss Jenny to read

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[238] Fielding mentions in the footnote that the translation of these lines was provided by James Harris. Sarah Fielding, *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates,* p. 23.

[239] Fielding writes, 'Early in the morning, after the public prayers which Mrs Teachum read every day, our little company took a walk in the garden whilst the breakfast was preparing.' *The Governess,* p. 89.

[240] After the school hours, the girls are allowed to amuse themselves in a garden adjoined to the academy. On Wednesday they learn and practice writing from their writing-master who lives some miles off from the academy. There is no school on Saturday in the afternoon but it is their 'writing day from morning-school till dinner'. On Sunday the 'little society' is taken to church by Mrs Teachum and on their return to the academy are allowed to spend their time in leisure in the arbour. On Tuesday Mrs Teachum takes them out for a walk 'either to the dairy house, or to the cherry-garden'. Fielding also makes it clear that Mrs Teachum teaches the girls from Monday to Friday in the morning. Hence, what books are taught and read by the girls are not mentioned by Fielding.

the fairy tales but has fables of her own for the girls which points toward another similarity with Socrates in *Memoirs.*[241] According to Socrates, an ideal instructor knows what to teach and how to teach in order to 'improve the mind'.[242] In *Memoirs* he sometimes uses fables to make his friends understand his advice. He tells the fable of the dog to Aristarchus in order to help him overcome his grief. Aristarchus, on a previous advice from Socrates, employed the members of his family into spinning wool, who spent their time in idleness, and was now accused by them of committing the same crime. Socrates, thus, consoles him with the fable of the dog. The fable tells the story of the sheep who accuse the dog of merely watching over them during the day and eating plenty during the night while they provide the wool and the milk to the farmer. The dog replies that it is because of his watchful duty that the sheep are secure from any danger and that he needs the food in order to continue protecting them. Aristarchus rejoices on hearing this and goes back in a happy state of mind.

Fielding, too, provides the fable of the Magpie in her preface to the novel in order to teach the girls to develop an appetite for learning.[243] The fable describes Magpie as the only bird who knows how to build a nest. The other birds, too, desire to live inside a house and ask Magpie to teach them. The following day Magpie explains to them the art of building a house with sticks and feathers but is time and again interrupted in his instructions. When explaining the way to arrange sticks the Crow interrupts and says that he is already aware of this step. When it comes to arranging feathers Jack-Daw interrupts and says that he is aware of this step. With every step that Magpie teaches one or the other bird interrupts in a similar manner.

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[241] Fielding's intent on using fables in *The Governess* is influenced not only from *Memoirs* but also from Richardson, who 'printed his version of Sir Roger L'Estrange's translation of *Aesop's Fables* in November 1739' and used the fable of the grasshopper (pg. 108), the fable of the wolf (pg. 224) in *Pamela* (1740). Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded (1740),* ed. by Peter Sabor with an introduction by Margaret A. Doody, (London: Penguin Classics, 1985).

[242] Sarah Fielding, *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates,* p. 87.

[243] Fielding incorporates two other fables in the novel. The fable of The Peacock and The Eagle is used by Miss Jenny to explain the defects of flattery to Miss Betty Ford (p. 88). Mrs Teachum provides the fable of the Assembly of the Birds to the girls at the end of novel to make them understand the importance of love and true companionship. Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 104.

Finally, when the nest is half built Magpie expresses his desire to instruct them no more and flies away. Fielding's moral through this fable is to teach children to never boast of one's knowledge and to be always ready to learn more. Therefore, Sarah Fielding follows the methods of Socrates in 'instructing our youth in the knowledge of their duty; and planting in the mind each virtuous principle', and explains, through Mrs Teachum, to her young readers to interpret fairy tales for morals.[244]

However, Socrates relates the fable to Aristarchus who is an adult whereas Fielding uses them for children. This distinction helps in strengthening my argument on critical interpretation in this chapter. Mrs Teachum instructs the girls to critically interpret fairy tales because the supernatural assistance used by their authors envelops various moral lessons for children. The minds of children are immature and in a constant state of development which makes them more attracted towards the supernatural assistance than understanding the moral lesson as is seen in *The Governess.* Whereas, when Socrates tells the fable to Aristarchus he readily understands the message and the lesson in the fable without Socrates telling him to focus on its interpretation. Therefore, fairy tales or fables are meant for adults because of their ability to comprehend moral values but it is the duty of the instructor to convey their proper interpretations if used by him in educating children. Sarah Fielding in the preface and Mrs Teachum in the novel, thus, provide those instructions. The usage of fables in the education of children is also explored in detail in chapter two of this thesis where Catharine Macaulay explains that 'Aesop's fables, which, though they were certainly written for the advantage of grown children, have in modern days been universally consigned to the use of

[244] Sarah Fielding, *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates,* p. 10.

nurseries.'[245] This helps us in understanding why Mrs Teachum's curriculum at the academy does not include the study of fairy tales.

Socrates, in book-IV in *Memoirs*, argues on the necessity of an educator to provide proper instructions to children in order for them to be happy. This reminds us of Fielding's dedication to Mrs Poyntz in *The Governess* where she writes that the ultimate advantage of teaching interpretative skills to children is happiness.[246] Socrates says,

> An Aptness to learn, together with a strength of memory, to retain what was already learnt; accompanied with a busy inquisitiveness into such things as might be of use for the right conduct of life […] indicated a mind, well-fitted for instruction; which if duly cultivated, would render the youth in whom they were found, not only happy in themselves, and their own families, but give them the power of making many others the same; since the benefits arising from thence, would be diffused throughout the whole community.[247]

These lines allow us to understand the influence of Socrates on Sarah Fielding and how she represents his ideals in *The Governess.* Socrates in these lines focuses on three different aspects that must form part of the instructions of an ideal educator. They are to develop an interest in learning, to strengthen the memory and to develop further curiosity for knowledge in children. Fielding follows Socrates and duly represents them in her preface to the novel. Socrates' 'aptness to learn' is reflected when Fielding tries to instruct her 'young readers' into developing an appetite for learning through a fable of the Birds. Next, Socrates lays emphasis on 'strength of memory' in order to affix any new knowledge in our mind for future references and for the improvement of our own character. This is also expressed by Fielding when she instructs her readers that 'Will those foolish children be served, who heap into their Heads a great deal, and yet never observe what they put there, either to mend their practice,

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[245] Catherine Macaulay, *Letters on education, with observations on religious and metaphysical subjects,* (London: 1790), p. 54.
[246] See my explanation of the dedication on p. 69 in chapter one of this thesis.
[247] Sarah Fielding, *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates,* p. 222.

or increase their knowledge.'[248] Hence, Fielding tries to convey that interpretation or proper 'observation' of the books we read will help in mending our actions and in increasing our knowledge. In the novel, too, Mrs Teachum's instructions lay emphasis on repetition along-with interpretation when she asks Miss Sukey to provide a summary of the play, *The Funeral*. According to her, repetition allows us to memorize the important events of a story, which were duly remembered by Miss Sukey, but interpretation helps in understanding moralistic lessons from it.

Socrates' further emphasis on accompanying memory with 'a busy inquisitiveness' or curiosity is visible when Fielding writes, 'One thing quite necessary to make any Instructions that come either from your Governors, or your Books, of any Use to you, is to attend with a Desire of Learning.'[249] Fielding observes that in order to acquire virtues and to be free from 'all Manner of Wickedness' it is necessary to always make the best use of the books we read with a desire to learn something new and to attend to the instructions of our governors.[250] She also instructs the governors, similar to Socrates in the above lines, to provide proper instructions and 'cultivate the mind' of the child toward generating that desire for knowledge which would ultimately lead to happiness.

Socrates also explains that an individual whose mind is properly cultivated from the instructions of his governors diffuses happiness all around himself and helps in building a virtuous society. This final argument of Socrates is also presented by Fielding in the preface when she says that 'Love and Affection for each other makes the Happiness of all Societies; and therefore Love and Affection is what we should chiefly encourage and cherish in our Minds.'[251] Sara Gadeken considers this as a 'utopian' concept and argues that such a society

[248] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. vi.
[249] Ibid, p. iv.
[250] Ibid, p. vi.
[251] Ibid.

can never be established let alone flourish. I argue instead that Fielding's aim in *The Governess* is to teach the importance of benevolence (another similarity with *Memoirs*) to the girls in order for them to build stronger relationships with fellow companions both inside and outside the academy. Therefore, she focuses on teaching them interpretative skills and we witness the demystification of Gadeken's idea of *The Governess* as a utopian novel when the girls exhibit the same behaviour outside the academy. Fielding writes, 'Mrs Teachum's school was mentioned throughout the country, as an example of peace and harmony; and also by the daily improvement of all her girls, it plainly appeared how early young people might attain great knowledge, if their minds were free from foolish anxieties about trifles and properly employed on their own improvement.'[252] From the above analysis it becomes clear that Fielding is highly influenced from Socrates and *The Governess* duly represents his ideals.

CONCLUSION

This chapter highlights two important aspects regarding girl's education in England from the early to the mid-eighteenth century when interpreted through Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). Former exploration of differences in education on the basis of gender and class in institutions founded by the Church or established by the English government provide extensive information on the type of education given to girls. This chapter, however, explores the type of education deemed necessary for girls and establishes, one, proper instruction for directing their imagination and two, critical interpretation of every knowledge they receive to be the distinguishing features of a good education. Such an education not only helps them in becoming exemplary students whose 'investigative minds' aim at interpreting reasons behind every line written in books but also dutiful citizens who aim for personal happiness and social

[252] Ibid, p. 111.

development.[253] Sarah Fielding through her ideal educator tries to persuade the eighteenth-century educational institutions to redirect their objectives toward the betterment of 'young readers'.[254] According to her, teachers in such institutions should aim at the intellectual development of their students through proper instructional teaching rather than preaching religion that remains irrelevant as a subject for children to study.

The extensive teaching of Christianity in schools worried English parents in the second half of the eighteenth century. They stopped sending their children to Charity Schools or Sunday Schools for a moral upbringing and preferred private boarding schools for their intellectual development. Dinah Birch explains how private tuitions continued till the early nineteenth century and writes that 'affluent middle-class families persisted in their custom of educating their children privately, using fee-paying schools and home teachers of widely varying levels of aspiration and competence.'[255] The Church authorities expressed their opposition, for example, in an Ordinance for the Founding of a Sunday School at Curry Rivel in 1786 by exclaiming that 'Those parents who […] obstinately refuse to send their children to the Sundays' School shall be deemed improper Objects to receive any Charity that shall in future be distributed in the parish of Curry Rivel.'[256] This same opposition is visible in the works of few members of the second-generation Bluestockings in the second half of the eighteenth century. When Hannah More opened a school in Cheddar in 1789 she was distressed to see the effects of an unreligious education on parents who hesitated in sending their children to such schools. 'Many of the opulent farmers patriotically opposed the innovation; one of them observing, that the country in which the ladies were introducing this

[253] The term 'investigative minds' is taken from Edmund Burke's *Sublime and Beautiful* which is discussed in detail in the interlude that follows this chapter.
[254] Fielding instructs her 'young readers' in the preface to *The Governess* to exhibit a humble desire for learning without pride in one's former knowledge.
[255] Birch, *Education,* p.333.
[256] Asa Briggs, *How They Lived*, p. 340.

disturbance had never prospered since religion had been brought into it by the monks of Glastonbury.'[257] Hannah More preached salvation on Scriptural grounds and her *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799) presents Christian doctrines to be the sole principle of children's education. Therefore, chapter two explores this religious paradigm in girl's education that continued in schools and academies in the second half of the eighteenth century and explores Hannah More's *Strictures* along-with Catherine Macaulay's *Letters on Education* (1790) for the emphasis these writers put on interpretation.

[257] William Roberts, *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs Hannah More,* 2 vols, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845), p. 338.

INTERLUDE

CRITICAL INTERPRETATION: FROM SARAH FIELDING TO ADAM SMITH

The introduction to this thesis mentions how the philosophy of interpretation is an age-old educational philosophy which was first outlined by Plato. Furthermore, in a brief exploration of the history of this unique method of education I present how it was incorporated by various other thinkers such as Spinoza, Locke and Rousseau in their respective works. I make it clear in the introduction that Plato prescribed this method of education for both boys and girls but later male thinkers ingeniously attributed it only for the education of boys. Girls were left to study the noble or sublime genres until Sarah Fielding argues through *The Governess* (1749) that the education of women must follow the same format as that of men, which is to teach them to critically interpret every book for the acquisition of true knowledge.[258] Even before Sarah Fielding there were other prominent female educationalists such as Mary Astell and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu who criticized the patriarchy and whose works lay emphasis on equality in education but I associate the revival of the educational practice of teaching students to critically interpret the books they read only to Sarah Fielding because *The Governess* (1749) is the first full-length children's novel and Fielding clearly uses this method for educating girls in her book.[259] In the introduction I mention male philosophers who theorized the philosophy of interpretation prior to Sarah Fielding (with the exception of Rousseau who was her contemporary), here I present the views Adam Smith, another male contemporary of Sarah Fielding, who not only elaborates on the importance of interpretation in education but also writes about the irrelevance of teaching religious texts to young

[258] Refer footnote 151 in chapter one.

[259] Walter S. Scott writes about Lady Montagu that she considered it wise for women to conceal their knowledge 'as they would conceal crookedness or lameness.' Furthermore, the very fact that she 'taught herself the learned languages in secret' allows us to understand the rule of patriarchy in the eighteenth century and the impartiality in educating women. Thus, Lady Montagu criticized such an educational system but from behind the curtains. *The Bluestocking Ladies*, p. 13.

children, an opinion shared by Sarah Fielding as well. An interest in Socratic philosophy, disregard for a Christian education of children and theorizing imagination and critical interpretation in early education as more important than reason put Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) on the same pedestal as Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). Smith's arguments on education of children present a unique similarity with the ideals of Fielding in *The Governess.* The similarities not only help in primarily understanding the larger plan of Mrs Teachum or establishing the importance of imagination in education whenever children read fairy tales but also in secondarily exploring the usefulness of religion as a subject in the education of children.[260]

Published ten years apart, *The Governess* (1749), a children's novel by a female English educationalist and *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), a treatise on sentiments and education by a famous Scottish economist differ in literary genres but present similar arguments on the education of children.[261] Smith lays emphasis on self-education, proper instruction and critical interpretation as the necessary aspects of children's education in the eighteenth century which are similar to the ideals of Sarah Fielding in *The Governess*. He explores human feelings and sentiments in order to have a harmonious society and expresses that 'it is the most artificial and refined education only […] which can correct the inequalities of our passive feelings.'[262] He explains that a form of education which is different from the conventional form of teaching of the early eighteenth-century (discussed in detail below) is necessary for a social change. The conventional teaching prepared children for a particular profession that suited them the most whereas Smith favoured an education that empowered children in the skill of decision-making.

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[260] Furthermore, Smith's arguments help develop the differences between the two *Governesses* of Sarah Fielding (1749) and that of Mary Martha Sherwood (1820) in chapter three of the thesis.
[261] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* edited by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).
[262] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments,* p. 139.

ADAM SMITH AND *THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS* (1759)

Adam Smith (1723-1790) completed *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* in 1759 and continued revising its editions in 1761, 1767, 1774, 1781 and 1790.[263] The groundwork for *Theory of Moral Sentiments* was established during his lectures at the University of Glasgow.[264] During his tenure at the university from 1751 to 1764 'he was appointed to the Chair of Logic in 1751 and moved to the Chair of Moral Philosophy in 1752.'[265] Smith's philosophy in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* takes into account the ideas of Locke, David Hume, Voltaire, Richardson, Rousseau and the various Greek philosophers (both pre and post Zeno of Citium who started the Stoic school of philosophy).[266] However, Smith's predisposition towards classical literature owes much to his mentor and teacher Francis Hutcheson who was the Professor of Moral Philosophy from 1730 to 1746. His lectures developed his interest in Socratic philosophy and Stoic philosophy and his translation of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* in 1742 acted as a major source of inspiration for arguments on concepts such as self-love or self-denial in Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments.*[267] Harold Jones explores the mentorship of Hutcheson along-with the influence of the stoics on Smith and writes, '*Meditations* refers to moral conviction in terms of the judgement passed by the self that has

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[263] Ibid, p. 5.

[264] First a pupil and then a close friend to Adam Smith, John Millar explains the content of Smith's lectures on Moral Philosophy. He writes, 'His course of lectures on this subject was divided into four parts. The first contained Natural Theology […] The second comprehended Ethics strictly so called and consisted chiefly of the doctrines which he afterwards published in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. In the third part, he treated at more length of that branch of morality which relates to justice […] in the last part he examined those political regulations which are founded, not upon the principle of *justice*, but that of *expediency*.' Ibid, p. 2.

[265] Ibid, p.1.

[266] Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (pg. 12), David Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* (pg. 23), Voltaire's *Treatise on Toleration* (pg. 123), Richardson's *Pamela* (pg. 143), Rousseau (pg. 183) and the entire part-VII of *Theory of Moral Sentiments* is influenced from various Greek philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Zeno and Epictetus. The page numbers mentioned here are from *Theory of Moral Sentiments* in which Smith mentions or refers to these thinkers; Smith met Voltaire in Geneva in 1764 and Edmund Burke at the London Royal Society in 1767. Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Essential Adam Smith,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[267] James Wodrow writes to the eleventh Earl of Buchan in 1808 that Smith 'made a laudable attempt at first to follow Hutcheson's animated manner, lecturing on Ethics without papers.' Smith was a student of Hutcheson in the 1730s and Wodrow in the 1740s. Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments,* p. 3.

retreated from public view (the "soul" or "helmsman") on the behaviour of the external man. Smith seems to be following this lead when he describes the process from which our moral sentiments derive.'[268] As a result of his developed interest Smith dedicated the entire part-VII of *Theory of Moral Sentiments* to the Greek authors and their ideals on education.

According to Adam Smith, sympathy helps in building benevolent bonds after granting moral approbation to the motives of an agent and the impartial spectator is the motivational drive that allows an individual to sacrifice today for a better future. When Smith writes that 'moral rules are inductive generalizations and that moral concepts must arise in the first place from feeling' it echoes the ideals of Sarah Fielding in *The Governess* from 1749.[269] Smith's entire theory is formulated around sympathy, benevolence, feelings, sentiments and moral judgements which mirrors Sarah Fielding's educational method as mentioned in *The Governess.* Young girls in *The Governess,* after receiving proper instructions from their governess, learn moral values from their peers by critically analysing, understanding and reflecting on their virtuous traits of sympathy and benevolence. Ten years after *The Governess,* in 1759 Smith elaborates on these traits through the characteristics of a learned man and in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* refers to him as the prudent man. The education of this prudent man and the lessons he imparts bridges Smith's educational theory with that of Fielding. Both the prudent man and Mrs Teachum aim at developing inner and outer characteristics of students by 'modelling' their interpretative ability as an everyday practice.[270]

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[268] Harold Jones, 'Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic Ethic and Adam Smith', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 95 (2010), pp. 89-96.

[269] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 10.

[270] Smith writes that his prudent man 'has been in the constant practice and, indeed, under the constant necessity, of modelling, or of endeavouring to model, not only his outward conduct and behaviour, but, as much as he can, even his inward sentiments and feelings.' Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 10.

The establishment of imagination as the nucleus of society in the works of Fielding and Smith underpins their shared belief in its importance for education. Therefore, this thesis explores the essentials of a proper education and a good teacher that dominated the then changing curriculum of educational institutions in the first half of the eighteenth century.[271] *The Governess* presents an educational practice that helps students in developing an interpretative mind with the help of imagination. Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* too, focuses on the role of sentiments and feelings that would shape a virtuous society and prioritizes imagination over reason because virtue is the embodiment of morality which, according to Smith, is not given to us but is made by ourselves. Fielding's aim through *The Governess* to educate young girls by allowing them the full use of their imagination to develop critical interpretative skills and Smith's aim through *Theory of Moral Sentiments* to explore the importance of imagination in education bridges the link between these two texts which this interlude aims to explore.[272]

SIMILAR IDEALS: FROM *THE GOVERNESS* (1749) TO *THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS* (1759)

As it has been mentioned earlier that the plan for composing *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* originated in Smith's lectures at the University of Glasgow, there are numerous examples in the text that allow us to understand Smith's educational theory as one which retraces the

[271] David A. Reid explains that different denominations of the Church preferred different educational curriculums and writes that 'although Baptists, Quakers and Evangelicals were sceptical of the value of education for preaching and saving souls, Congregationalists and Presbyterians thought it essential and opened collegiate academies to replicate as much as possible the Oxbridge curriculum.' Thus, evangelicals lay emphasis on the Scriptures whereas Presbyterians lay emphasis on a more diverse curriculum. 'Education as a philanthropic enterprise: the dissenting academies of eighteenth-century England', *History of Education,* 39 (2010), pp. 299-317.

[272] In *The Governess* Fielding explains that children tend to focus more on supernatural elements in fairy tales rather than focusing on important moral lessons within the tale. Hence, Fielding argues that teachers must assist students in critically interpreting not only fairy tales which excite their imagination but also other books they read. Adam Smith, too, as shown in the next section (refer footnote 17 below), argues that children's imagination tend to run free when left unchecked and that it is the responsibility of the parents or his teachers to direct him towards developing critical interpretation skills.

ideals of Fielding from *The Governess.* The below paragraphs explain Smith's views on early education, explore the larger plan and characteristics of Mrs Teachum being reflected in the characteristics of Smith's prudent man, Mrs Teachum's authority at her academy as non-patriarchal in fulfilling her objective of inducing the skill of interpretation, and Fielding's attitude along-with Smith's toward religion.

Moyra Haslett accuses the parents for providing wrong education to the girls before they enter Mrs Teachum's academy because that education developed in them the malicious sentiments of envy, pride and anger. She writes, 'As with Fielding's *The Governess,* all of these faults have been cultivated at home, where parents, not school, are to blame.'[273] Proper home education is an important aspect of a child's intellectual development which is also explained by Smith in part-VI of *Theory of Moral Sentiments* where he writes,

> Our imagination […] charmed with the beauty of that accommodation which reigns in the palaces and economy of the great, to prevent their wants, to gratify their wishes and to amuse and entertain their most frivolous desires […] it is this deception which rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind.[274]

In these lines Smith tries to argue that the inter-dependence of imagination and deception increases when left unchecked. In the early stage of life our imagination runs wild with every new knowledge we come across and requires control and proper direction from our parents or teachers.[275] Two important aspects arise from this statement. One, a better understanding of differentiating various sources of knowledge as a result of our parents' teachings. Two, the behaviour of parents towards children's education. In order to develop good-natured children it is necessary to provide proper education at home. Such an education takes into account not only the learning capabilities of a child but also the teaching capabilities of a parent. A child

[273] Moyra Haslett, 'All pent up together: Representations of Friendship in Fictions of Girls' Boarding-Schools, 1680-1800,' pp. 81-99.
[274] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments,* pg. 183.
[275] The knowledge referred to here is the knowledge gained from books and not through worldly experience.

is attracted towards fairy tales in his younger days whereas novels, plays and poems are perused only at a later stage.[276] These sources captivate the mind of a child without rendering him any useful knowledge if left unchecked. It is then the parent's responsibility to acknowledge (respect) the source and discreetly instruct the child towards a better one rather than declaring his enthusiasm as wrong and useless.[277] According to Smith, parents should make the child understand the 'difference between virtue and mere propriety; between those qualities and actions which deserve to be admired and celebrated and those which simply deserve to be approved of.'[278] Sources of knowledge which are directly incapable of providing virtuous lessons to children prioritize exciting their imagination for mere amusement, and making the children understand the rare usefulness (propriety) of these sources through critical interpretations of the texts rests with the parents or their governors. We see this technique already being followed by Sarah Fielding in *The Governess* (1749) when Mrs Teachum grants permission to Miss Jenny to read fairy tales or the play to the girls; and when Fielding explains the necessity of assessing every new knowledge that children come across for propriety in her letter to James Harris in 1751.[279] In following such an approach towards bettering children's education parents set themselves as ideal educators and children follow (respect) their teachings unreservedly, and as Smith writes, 'domestic education is the institution of nature', the attitude of parents towards education eventually develops the attitude of the child.[280] As the parents of the girls in Mrs Teachum's academy

[276] Emily J. Hopkins and Deena Skolnick Weisberg conduct a research on how fictional sources of knowledge such as novels, movies develop children's interpretative skills in comparison with non-fictional sources. Their results show that fairy-lands captivate the minds of children but they can learn important lessons if their teachers provide proper interpretations. 'The Youngest Readers' Dilemma: A Review of Children's Learning from Fictional Sources', *Developmental Review*, 43 (2017), pp. 48–70.

[277] Rousseau in Book-3 of *Emile,* written for children aged 12-15, writes, 'We do not enter into his thoughts, but suppose them exactly like our own. Constantly following our own method of reasoning, we cram his mind not only with a concatenation of truths, but also with extravagant notions and errors.' Rousseau, *Emile; or Concerning Education,* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1889), p. 129.

[278] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 25.

[279] Martin C. Battestin and Clive T. Probyn, *The Correspondence,* p. 125.

[280] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 222.

fail in accomplishing this, Mrs Teachum becomes that ideal educator who assiduously transforms the girls into virtuous students.

We have seen Mrs Teachum being highly criticized for her role in bringing this transformation. Her authority at the academy is considered inferior to Miss Jenny's and her presence after the reading of fairy tales and the play is concluded to have no effect. However, chapter one shows that Mrs Teachum's absence, style of punishment and the placement of Jenny as the monitor of the class are the constituents of her larger plan to teach girls to critically interpret any knowledge they come across for morals and virtues. Following a comparative analysis between the primary and secondary texts of this chapter, Smith's ideals in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* help us further understand Fielding's motive behind Mrs Teachum's absence in *The Governess*. He writes, 'The propriety of our moral sentiments is never so apt to be corrupted, as when the indulgent and partial spectator is at hand, while the indifferent and impartial one is at a great distance.'[281] Proper distance, according to Smith, plays an important role in directing our moral sentiments for approbation and applause. A stranger (partial spectator) who exists in the public sphere is always partial to us because of his great distance from our personal sphere; similarly, friends and family, too, share this partiality because of their extreme closeness to us. Therefore, in order to receive honest and impartial judgements it is necessary for an individual to maintain proper (not extremely far and not extremely close) distance from others. Maria Paganelli acknowledges this and writes, 'The distance to develop impartiality has to be the right distance.'[282] Fielding understands this and makes Mrs Teachum stay away while the girls amuse themselves with fairy tales and plays. She enters the arbour only to teach them the skill of interpreting those fairy tales and plays and provides them instructions as an impartial spectator. In order to continue with

[281] Ibid, p. 154.
[282] Maria Pia Paganelli, 'The Moralizing Role of Distance in Adam Smith: The *Theory of Moral Sentiments* as Possible Praise of Commerce', *History of Political Economy*, 42 (2010), pp. 425–41.

impartiality and to avoid any corruption in her judgement by sympathizing with the girls when they relate their autobiographies to each other she stays away and maintains that proper distance. Mrs Teachum's absence in the novel, thus, forms a part of her larger plan and helps us in understanding Fielding's true motive through the same.

Similar to Plato's philosopher and Locke's educator, Smith's prudent man exemplifies Fielding's Mrs Teachum. Smith writes,

> But though always sincere, he is not always frank and open; and though he never tells anything but the truth, he does not always think himself bound, when not properly called upon, to tell the whole truth. As he is cautious in his actions, so he is reserved in his speech; and never rash or unnecessarily obtrudes his opinion concerning either things or persons.[283]

According to Smith, a prudent man is one who 'always studies seriously and earnestly to understand whatever he professes to understand' and 'is not ostentatious even of the abilities which he really possesses.'[284] Here he explains that the prudent man always speaks the truth but can hide parts of it in the face of an immature audience. His speech is short and direct with an aim that does not reflect imposition of any kind. In chapter one *The Governess* Fielding decides not to describe the punishment given by Mrs Teachum which leaves Miss Jenny perplexed. She says, 'Her method of punishing I never could find out.'[285] When in the third chapter Mrs Teachum explains her larger plan of transforming the girls into virtuous students by allowing them the opportunity to reflect on their mistakes without any interference the motive behind the punishment becomes clear. According to Smith, a generous motive which may or may not be instantly understood by the spectators or the bearer of the punishment is the most important reason for categorizing the punisher's act as good or bad. He further explains,

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[283] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments,* p. 214.
[284] Ibid, p. 213.
[285] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 7.

> It is to be observed, however, that how beneficial soever on the one hand, or how hurtful soever on the other, the actions or intentions of the person who acts may have been to the person, if I may say so, acted upon […] there appears to have been no impropriety in the motives of the agent, if, on the contrary, the affections which influenced his conduct are such as we must necessarily enter into, we can have no sort of sympathy with the resentment of the person who suffers.[286]

Miss Jenny fails to understand Mrs Teachum's motive behind her punishment and therefore sympathizes with Miss Sukey in chapter two of *The Governess.* However, Mrs Teachum's motive of preparing the girls for self-sufficiency through critical interpretations of not only the books they read but also of the acts they commit demerits any criticism that questions the propriety of her punishment. Mrs Teachum, thus, acting accordingly in reference to the lines above justifies her punishment and abstains herself from disclosing her entire plan.

Smith's views on the merits of a virtuous companionship presented in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* help us in developing similarities and understanding Fielding's characterization of Miss Jenny as a student whose immature interpretative abilities develop along-with the other girls in *The Governess.* Smith writes, 'The man who associates chiefly with the wise and the virtuous, though he may not himself become either wise or virtuous, cannot help conceiving a certain respect at least for wisdom and virtue.'[287] Miss Jenny advises other girls only after Mrs Teachum instructs her to do so and her hesitation in deriving a moral from the play presents unique opportunities to question her character. Jenny's attitude as an obedient pupil reflects her 'respect for wisdom and virtue' gained from the company and instructions of Mrs Teachum. She may imbibe those qualities unreservedly with experience and age but her present knowledge is insufficient to challenge Mrs Teachum's authority in the novel. Smith's argument on habits presented below help in further building my argument against Jenny's position at the academy. Smith writes,

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[286] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 71.
[287] Ibid, p. 224.

> Those general rules of conduct, when they have been fixed in our minds by habitual reflection, are of great use in correcting the misrepresentations of self-love concerning what is fit and proper to be done in our particular situation.[288]

Smith explains an action to be the result of 'habitual reflection'. The general rules which are founded on experience convert into habits when taught every day and therefore our actions reflect those habits. Furthermore, in the judgement of an action habits become the decisive tool rather than the occasional passion (self-love) that provoked it. Keigo Tajima explores the influence of habits on actions and considers them 'as conventional means for directing selfish actions'.[289] When we view *The Governess* in light of Smith's arguments from *Theory of Moral Sentiments* we get a clearer understanding of the larger plan of Mrs Teachum and of Jenny's position at the academy. Miss Jenny stands out as the wisest because she is taught to act and behave in like manner by her mother who cultivated her behaviour as a part of her habit.[290] Mrs Teachum, on the other hand, tries to intellectually develop the girls at the academy by teaching to them the skill of interpretation. After Mrs Teachum instructs her to derive proper morals from fairy tales Jenny is still unable to provide any interpretation of the play. Therefore, Mrs Teachum sets ground for Smith's prudent man and holds back from telling the entire truth to Miss Jenny because of her present immaturity and developing interpretative skills. However, reservation in speech is not the only similarity between Fielding's Mrs Teachum and Smith's prudent man, providing proper instructions to children to develop superior reason and understanding, too, makes them stand on the same pedestal.

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[288] Ibid, p. 160.

[289] Keigo Tajima, 'The Theory of Institutions and Collective Action in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*', *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 36 (2007), pp. 578–94.

[290] Obedience has been the prime lesson of Jenny's mother to her. She says, 'I do not doubt but your obedience to me will make you […] put on the appearance of cheerfulness [..] for if you would obey me as you ought, you must try heartily to root from your mind all sorrow and gloominess.' Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 19.

The child develops some level of interpretative skill after parents provide to him proper sources and proper guidance but the results of a good early education are visible only after he starts exercising prudence and far-sightedness. Smith writes,

> The wise man whom Nature has endowed with this too exquisite sensibility and whose too lively feelings have not been sufficiently blunted and hardened by early education and proper exercise, will avoid, as much as duty and propriety will permit, the situations for which he is not perfectly fitted.[291]

In establishing Mrs Teachum as an ineffective governess critics such as Courtney Mills or Moyra Haslett fail to recognize her motives behind the limited appearances she makes in the novel. Mrs Teachum never exceeds the number of students in her academy beyond nine and the education she provides to them is a result of her husband's comprehensive instructions regarding the education of children for which Jessica Lim identifies her as a 'maternal pedagogue endowed with patriarchal authority.'[292] Following Fielding's ideals presented through Mrs Teachum, Smith here explains that proper guidance develops understanding which helps children in choosing the best for themselves after critically interpreting every available option. However, in light of their own desires and knowledge adults disregard children's sentiments and deprive them of this choice, as is done by the parents of the girls in *The Governess*. Mrs Teachum, on the other hand, as an impartial governess rather than a substitute for patriarchal authority provides this choice to her students by allowing them to experience every form of writing but with its proper interpretation. Smith's prudent man exhibits similar ideals when he says that 'superior reason and understanding' helps us in 'discerning the remote consequences of all our actions and of foreseeing the advantages or detriment which is likely to result from them.'[293] However, developing 'superior reason'

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[291] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 245.
[292] Jessica W.H. Lim and Rebecca Davies, 'Written Maternal Authority and Eighteenth-Century Education in Britain: Educating by the Book', *The Review of English Studies*, 68 (2017), pp. 383–85.
[293] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments,* p. 189.

refers to directing our imagination in understanding the follies and vices of characters in works of literature which result in their downfall. Once students decipher those reasons they become proficient in differentiating useful knowledge from knowledge for amusement and advertently develop the skill of critical interpretation which helps them in becoming virtuous and successful citizens. Smith terms it as the ability of self-command and writes that 'Self-command, by which we are enabled to abstain from present pleasure or to endure present pain, in order to obtain a greater pleasure or avoid a greater pain in some future time.'[294]

Religion, an important aspect of the eighteenth century, is not allowed to surface in *The Governess* by Sarah Fielding and Adam Smith follows suit. In *The Governess* religion or religious activities are not included in the girls' timetable. Mrs Teachum makes the girls recite prayers at mornings and nights and takes them to the church every Sunday with strict instructions of behaving 'with decency and devotion suitable to the occasion'.[295] This is the most Mrs Teachum does to make the girls indulge in acts of devotion and religion. According to Smith, religion does not help in creating a virtuous society. Its principles demoralize human efforts and its propagators fail to understand the demerits of imparting this knowledge to children. He writes,

> Religion can alone afford them any effectual comfort. She alone can tell them, that it is of little importance what man may think of their conduct, while the all-seeing Judge of the world approves of it. She alone can present to them the view of another world; a world of more candour, humanity and justice, than the present; where their innocence is in due time to be declared and their virtue to be finally rewarded.[296]

If Fielding's idea were utopian, then religion here offers a dystopian view of our present world. Smith explains that religion labels all human efforts and knowledge as insufficient for God's approval because it is their lack of knowledge which prevents them from making

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[294] Ibid.
[295] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 83.
[296] Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, pp. 120-21.

virtuous decisions. Religion, thus, offers a solution of focussing all our efforts towards gaining God's approval. Every thought and action must reflect devotion and sanctity.[297] Smith writes, 'Religion affords such strong motives to the practice of virtue and guards us by such powerful restraints from the temptations of vice, that many have been led to suppose, that religious principles were the sole laudable motives of action.'[298] Smith's emphasis on the word 'suppose' is critical here because religion in the above lines fails to acknowledge human efforts as building blocks for improving our present society. Smith acknowledges and refers the lack of knowledge in humans as 'distance from propriety'. According to him, the idea of being perfect changes from individual to individual, hence, when we compare a thing to perfection we only find faults with it, whereas, when we compare it to the level of excellence that can be achieved in that area we witness beauty and merit.[299] He explains that the 'administration of universal happiness is the business of God and not of man. To man is allotted a much humbler department, one much more suitable to the weakness of his powers; the care of his own happiness, of that of his family.'[300] Smith acknowledges the inferiority of humans who should aim at improving themselves and creating a harmonious society, whereas religion, according to him, demerits every human effort towards betterment and demoralizes every form of education as imperfect.

God or the philosophy of religion is impossible for humans to understand and propagators of religion need to acknowledge that everything is at a certain distance from

[297] 'All affections for particular objects, ought to be extinguished in our breast and one great affection take the place of all others, the love of the Deity, the desire of rendering ourselves agreeable to him.' Ibid, p. 171.
[298] Ibid.
[299] 'The first is the ideal of complete propriety and perfection, which, no human conduct ever did, or ever can come up to […] The second is the idea of that degree of proximity or distance from this complete perfection. Whatever goes beyond this degree, how far soever it may be removed from perfection, seems to deserve applause.' Ibid, p. 26. For further reading see point 26 on page 248 of *Moral Sentiments*.
[300] Ibid, p. 237.

perfection or propriety and that a prudent man is one who acknowledges this distance. Daniel Klein explores the foundation of Smith's assertions on religion and writes,

> Many theists say, similarly, that we do not have foundational access to God (even those who believe that scripture is the word of God might feel that there is no foundational way to adjudicate interpretations of scripture, nor interpretations of "scripture is the word of God"). The framework is a way of thinking and the case for embracing it is non-foundational.[301]

Klein here explains that there is neither any correct nor wrong interpretations of scriptures, they depend solely on an individual's understanding. Propagators of religion who disguise themselves as learned in the word of God impose their interpretations of scriptures on others as decisive and governing. Smith, thus, instructs his readers to be vigilant of such propagators for they are the society's true enemy.[302] Fielding, in her translation of *The Memoirs* presents similar ideals which lead us to analyse Mrs Teachum's views in *The Governess* in the same light. Regarding the education of children, proper instructions in subjects that excite their imagination rather than the fear of God is an important factor in bringing out the best in a child. This aspect is mentioned by Plato, Xenophon and Locke and is duly followed by Fielding and Smith. Fielding's Mrs Teachum allows the girls to read fairy tales as part of their amusement whereas Smith's prudent man enjoys in 'all the established decorums and ceremonials of society' in his own controlled manner.[303] Therefore, religion according to Fielding and Smith is an inappropriate subject for children to study and indulge in.

FROM SARAH FIELDING TO HANNAH MORE

The above analysis shows how Fielding and Smith focus on enhancing a child's interpretative skills and how the study of religious books, according to them, provides little assistance in

[301] Daniel Klein, 'Adam Smith's Non-Foundationalism', *Society*, 53 (2016), pp. 278–86.
[302] Smith writes, 'He seems to imagine that he can arrange the different members of a great society with as much ease as the hand arranges the different pieces upon a chess-board.' Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 234.
[303] Ibid, p. 214.

that enhancement. This point is carried forward by Catharine Macaulay and opposed by Hannah More in chapter two but before I move forward and explore the lives of these two writers it is necessary to understand how the views of Adam Smith and Hannah More present a literary connection.

The views of Adam Smith, as the above analysis shows, are perfectly aligned with those of Sarah Fielding but present a stark contrast with those of Hannah More. More openly criticizes and refers to Adam Smith when she writes,

> Another class of contemporary authors turned all the force of their talents to excite emotions, to inspire sentiment, and to reduce all mental and moral excellence into sympathy and feeling. These softer qualities were elevated at the expense of principle; and young women were incessantly hearing unqualified sensibility extolled as the perfection of their nature.[304]

Hannah More criticizes her contemporary authors (Smith) for prioritizing emotions and sentiments over principles. Principles here, according to More, refer to Scriptural principles mentioned in the Bible. She argues that these 'softer qualities' misguide women into believing that human action must arise from feeling rather than from duty. 'The sense of duty', according to Smith, 'should be the sole principle of our conduct, is no where the precept of Christianity', instead 'it should be the ruling and the governing one, as philosophy and as, indeed, common sense directs.'[305] Smith states that Christianity does not forces anyone to follow the sacred rules, instead it only acts as a guide for a better life. This is clearly opposed by Hannah More not only in the lines above but also when she writes that 'it is the work of God, we readily acknowledge, to implant religion in the heart, and to maintain it there as a ruling principle of conduct'.[306] More's views also contradict other important topics such as self-denial which form the basis of Smith's philosophy in *Theory of Moral*

[304] Ibid, pp. 73-4.
[305] Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, p. 171.
[306] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 164.

Sentiments. According to More, self-denial is to act in order to gain God's approval and to make ourselves fit for heaven whereas, according to Smith, self-denial is to act in order to gain another person's approval and to make ourselves fit for society. Smith argues that we always require another's approval as a result of which we adjust our sentiments but More argues that we only need to adjust our actions according to the scriptures. Therefore, the ideals of Smith and More contradict each other and religion is the epicentre of this contradiction. This further allows us to understand that Hannah More, a female member of the Bluestockings, not only discredited the views of Adam Smith but also those of Sarah Fielding, a female writer who is closely associated with the inner circle of the Bluestockings.[307]

The Bluestockings was a group of educated aristocratic women in the eighteenth century. Sarah Fielding was not a formal member of this group but some of its prominent members such as Elizabeth Carter and Sarah Scott were close friends with her and Elizabeth Montagu often commented on her works.[308] Gary Kelly points out that 'women writers associated with the inner Bluestocking circle, such as Sarah Fielding, had or assumed less claim to genteel status, and also published a number of books; these were unabashedly moralistic and didactic.'[309] The inner Bluestocking circle, as Kelly explains, consisted of all

[307] Hannah More was well aware of Sarah Fielding although she never commented on her works as a result of class-difference between them. She praises Richardson for his genius writings and criticizes the novels by Henry Fielding as 'vicious boo' and an 'abhorrence' but nowhere in her *Memoirs* does she mentions Sarah Fielding or her works. See William Roberts, *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs Hannah More,* Vol. 1 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845), p. 79, 109.

[308] Montagu's friendship with James Harris who helped Sarah Fielding in translating Xenophon's *Memorabilia* also hints towards the fact that she was clearly aware of the literary excellence of Henry Fielding's sister. Since the Bluestockings greatly admired Richardson and criticized Henry Fielding on his writing abilities it becomes clear that Sarah Fielding was only famous as Henry Fielding's sister. The class difference created by the Bluestockings between the Fielding siblings and themselves also adds to our understanding of Sarah Fielding's position in the group. See Montagu's letter to Elizabeth Carter dated 19 July, 1766 in which she criticizes Harris for having 'a superficial knowledge' of the classics. *Writings of the Bluestocking Circle,* 1738-1785, Vol. 1, ed. by Elizabeth Eger, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), p. 170.

[309] Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism,* p. xlix.

those women writers who 'published relatively little' than others.[310] It is to be noted that Kelly associates Fielding with the Bluestockings and does not entitle her as a member which helps in developing a literary connection between the selected authors in this thesis. A brief account of the Bluestockings, thus, must be provided here not only because of their importance in helping us understand the position of women in the eighteenth century but also because Hannah More, the selected author in chapter two of this thesis, belonged to the second generation of this group.

The Bluestockings consisted of educated aristocratic women who played hostess to casual discussions on the literary developments of the age which sometimes changed into serious conversations on the works of their peers. The group consisted of Mary Delany, Elizabeth Carter, Elizabeth Montagu, Hester Chapone, Hester Lynch Thrale, Hannah More, Frances Burney, Elizabeth Vesey and others.[311] There were prominent male figures such as Lord Lyttleton, Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, Horace Walpole, Edmund Burke, Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir W.W. Pepys, Dr Burney and Benjamin Stillingfleet who were not members per se but were invited to the gatherings.[312] It is to be noted that the Bluestockings was only a group of women from the aristocratic and the professional middle-class of the eighteenth century who had received a decent education and who tried their best to enter the literary world which continued to be dominated by men. Bridget Hill elaborates on the literary women of the eighteenth century that 'even those who were writers and authors seemed content to accept the inferior position allotted to them because they were women. It was enough for the great

[310] Ibid.

[311] Other members included Elizabeth Boscawen, Ann Ord, Catharine Talbot, Frances Greville, Frances Anne Crewe, Charlotte Walsingham and Mary Monckton.

[312] Hannah More writes to her sister in 1788 that Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua, Mr Jerningham, Mr Walpole, Dr Blagdon and Dr Johnson were frequent guests at the Bluestockings parties. See her letter dated January 11, 1788. Also refer to Sir W.W. Pepys' letter to More from Gloucester Place on February 5, 1825 in which he thanks More for including him in her 'Bas Bleau' poem, and in which he further admires being invited as a guest to the Bluestockings meetings. William Roberts, *Memoirs of Mrs Hannah More*, pp. 281, 382.

majority of them to enjoy the recognition that they received in a limited sphere.'[313] In their attempt to make a name for themselves or as Walter Scott remarks, 'for self-preservation', few members of the Bluestockings group not only adhered to orthodox beliefs set by the patriarchal society but also made it clear that differences in a society on the basis of class must continue to exist.[314] However, not all members of this group represented this idea. Gary Kelly observes that 'Bluestocking philosophy and Bluestocking philosophers seem to mean a commitment to the intellectual companionship of men and women.'[315] This observation allows us to understand that the members of the Bluestockings, both male and female, were committed to the progress of society and not only admired each other's literary contributions but also felt no disrespect in accepting each other's views.

In light of remarks made by Bridget Hill and Walter S. Scott in the previous paragraph that some female members of the Bluestockings adhered to patriarchal beliefs with respect to the education of women, chapter two presents how Hannah More was one of them. Furthermore, in light of the central argument of this thesis I present how Catharine Macaulay and Hannah More, irrespective of having opposite views on the religious upbringing of children, stand on common ground when it comes to teaching girls the importance of interpretation for the acquisition of knowledge. As an Evangelical campaigner Hannah More tried to expand the Bluestockings ideals or the Bluestockings philosophy of rescuing the lower-class women and broadening the aspects of education for the upper-class women.

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[313] Bridget Hill, *Eighteenth-Century Women: An Anthology*, (Taylor & Francis Group, 2012), p. 49.

[314] Walter S. Scott writes that 'the instinct for self-preservation taught those women who were learned […] that only through union could they hope for survival.' *The Bluestocking Ladies*, p. 14; Furthermore, in light of Hill's remark and for the purpose of this thesis I explore Hannah More's *Strictures* (1799) in chapter two which allows us to understand how she accepted women's intellectual inferiority along-with her ideals on the education not only of women but also of the poor. Her acceptance of women's intellectual inferiority is clear when she writes that 'the profession of ladies, to which the bent of their instructions should be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and mistresses of families.' This and other examples mentioned in chapter two of this thesis help justify this claim. Hannah More, *Strictures,* p. 107.

[315] Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism,* p. x; Furthermore, the intellectual companionship of Sarah Fielding and Samuel Richardson, and Hannah More and David Garrick is explored in detail in chapter one and two respectively.

Catharine Macaulay, on the other hand, transgressed all 'gendered boundaries of genre and discourse', as Gary Kelly terms it, and in her pursuit of intellectual achievement presented views in complete synchronicity with those of Sarah Fielding on the education of women.[316]

[316] Elizabeth Eger, *Bluestocking Feminism,* p. l.

CHAPTER 2: CRITICAL INTERPRETATION FOR MORAL DEVELOPMENT- HANNAH MORE'S *STRICTURES ON MODERN SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION* (1799)

Under the mask of religion, I fear I indulge my own humours and resentments.[317]

Tenets framed on the principle of a human interest, were represented as divine truths, and coerced on the human mind under the pains and penalties of death in this world, and damnation in the next.[318]

This chapter explores the educational practice of critical interpretation in Hannah More's *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799) and Catharine Macaulay's *Letters on Education* (1790). It compares More's argument on an early Christian education of women with Macaulay's curriculum of a 'mechanical education' which delays the study of Scriptures till the age of twenty one.[319] Both writers agree on teaching interpretative skills to girls but differ in the specifics of the education that their respective educators impart. Hannah More's ideal educator has 'a strong impression of the corruption of our nature' and lays emphasis on critically interpreting the Scriptures for the moral development of her pupils.[320] Catharine Macaulay's ideal educator, on the other hand, combines learning with 'judgement, penetration and sagacity' and lays emphasis on a diverse education for the intellectual development of girls.[321] According to More, the lack of an early Christian education of a girl is the primary cause for her moral degradation as she writes, 'one cannot help trembling for the event of that education, from which religion, as far as the governess is concerned, is thus formally and systematically excluded.'[322] When it comes to teaching Scriptures Macaulay

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[317] William Roberts, *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs Hannah More,* Vol. 2 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845), p. 32.
[318] Catharine Macaulay, *Letters on education, with observations on Religious and Metaphysical Subjects,* (London: 1790), p. 317.
[319] Ibid, p. 129.
[320] Hannah More, *Strictures on the modern system of female education, With a view of the principles and conduct prevalent among women of rank and fortune,* 2 vols. Vol. 1, (London: 1799), p. 64.
[321] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 104.
[322] Hannah More, *Strictures*, p. 102.

observes that 'how few indeed, are the number of adults, who have sufficient soundness of understanding, and strength of intellect, to study theology with good effect'.[323] Macaulay makes it clear that a higher level of understanding and interpretation is required in order to deduce moralistic lessons from Scriptures, a feat seldom accomplished by teachers let alone by children. Her argument also helps us in understanding why she excludes religious texts from her prescribed curriculum which is meant only for a pupil who shows 'any marks of more than ordinary vigour of intellect'.[324] According to Macaulay, nothing could be more harmful in the intellectual pursuit of knowledge than an early Christian education of girls. Through a close examination of the works of Catharine Macaulay and Hannah More this chapter aims at representing two facets of education in the second half of the eighteenth century. The former focuses on providing a diverse education to children whereas the latter focuses only on the Christian upbringing of children in schools.

Hannah More (1745-1833) and Catharine Macaulay (1731-1791) deal with the subject of the Christian education of women in detail in their respective texts. The difference in their opinions on the issue is based on a child's interpretative ability to understand the Scriptures and the moral lessons they convey. More argues that education, especially early education, must be entirely Christian whereas Macaulay argues that the study of the sacred writings of Christianity must be delayed until the student develops proper interpretative skills to understand their hidden morals. For example, Macaulay in her prescribed curriculum recommends teaching Ferguson for a general English history along-with Gibbon for an insight into Greek history at the age of fourteen, a course on logic through James Harris' *Philosophical Arrangements* (1775) at the age of eighteen and the sacred texts of Christianity only after the age of twenty.[325] Macaulay, by placing the study of Scriptures at the end of her

[323] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 89.
[324] Ibid, p. 128.
[325] Ibid, p. 129. The entire curriculum by Macaulay is discussed in detail later in the chapter.

curriculum, aims at initially developing the interpretative skills of children through other books in order that they are able to comprehend moralistic lessons from Scriptures later on. More, on the other hand, argues that 'the destruction which lurks under the harmless or instructive names of *General History, Natural History, Travels, Voyages, Lives, Encyclopaedias, Criticism, and Romance*' makes it even more necessary to peruse Scriptures for the acquisition of true knowledge.[326] According to More, these works indulge their readers into 'destructive politics' because their sophist authors present facts with 'impudent infidelity' and that it is only through Scriptures that we can learn moral values.[327] Therefore, Macaulay lays emphasis on developing interpretative skills before perusing Scriptures whereas More lays emphasis on learning to interpret from the Scriptures. Irrespective of both writers focusing on the development of interpretative skills in children, More, observes Patricia Rodriguez, makes 'no attempts to outline a more suitable curriculum' unlike Macaulay, instead she presents a three-step model for the study of Scriptures which divides the learning process into segregation, combination and reflection.[328] Thus, exploring the theme of interpretation in their selected texts not only differentiates my research from earlier studies on More and Macaulay but also adds to the current literary debates on women's education in the eighteenth century.

In the sections below I explore Hannah More's *Strictures* and Macaulay's *Letters* in detail and establish the emphasis put on interpretation in education by the two authors along-with a critical study of their views on religion and religious texts in the education of children. As this thesis identifies changes in the education of women in the eighteenth century in a chronological order, I explore Catharine Macaulay's *Letters on Education* (1790) before

[326] Hannah More, *Strictures*, p. 31.
[327] Ibid, p. 32.
[328] Patricia Rodrigues, 'Hannah More: Anti-Feminist, Counter-Revolutionary or Conservative Feminist?' *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 4 (2011), pp. 94-5.

analysing Hannah More's *Strictures* (1799). I present Macaulay's views in *Letters* on the education of children through a case study of her own daughter's education which helps in understanding how, for children in the eighteenth century, studying a diverse curriculum helped in the development of their interpretative skills.

CATHARINE MACAULAY

Catharine Macaulay spent her childhood in her father's library that helped her become, as Henry J. Swallow writes, a 'fearless writer' who was bound to attract heavy criticism as a result of her exceptional knowledge that 'ventured out of the proper province of her sex'.[329] The province of the women in the eighteenth century is defined socially not only from their confinement to the household but also educationally from their confinement to the study of 'noble' subjects (explained in detail by Gary Kelly in chapter one).[330] Macaulay crossed the threshold of that province as is observed by Bridget Hill who wrote her first biography in 1992 in *The Republican Virago.* Since then the life and works of Macaulay began receiving attention with her voluminous *The History of England* (1763-1783) getting the most of it. Kate Davies and Mahasweta Baxipatra acknowledge her as an eminent historian of her time whose *History* competed with that of David Hume.[331] It earned her great fame among the 'Wilkite radicals and old Whigs, baronets and middle-rank professionals, and moderate

[329] Henry J. Swallow, *Catherines of History,* (London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row, 1888), pp. 138-40.
[330] Refer footnote 151 in chapter one.
[331] The first volume of *History of England from the Accession of James I to that of Brunswick Line* published in 1763, soon after her marriage with Dr George Macaulay in 1760, was a result of her keen, 'spontaneous and unintentional' interest in politics and freedom which was generated, developed and increased in her father's library. The extensive influence of the Greek and Latin curriculum of the Grammar Schools in the early eighteenth century, explained in chapter one of this thesis, that allowed writers such as Sarah Fielding, Elizabeth Carter or James Harris to produce translations is also seen in Catharine Macaulay who was attracted towards reading those translations, or as Davies observes, developing her intellectual interests from 'the annals of the Roman and Greek republicks'. By 1767, Macaulay had written four of eight volumes of *The History of England* and presented a Whig perspective of the seventeenth-century British politics through her interpretation of the Stuart politics, the Civil War (1642-1651) and the Glorious Revolution (1688-89). Her books competed with David Hume's *The History of England* which was published in six volumes in 1754, 1756, 1759 and 1761. Kate Davies, *Catharine Macaulay and Mercy Otis Warren: The Revolutionary Atlantic and the Politics of Gender*, (Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 6.

Anglican and dissenting churchmen' who attended her dinners.[332] If in *The History* she expresses her political views, *A Treatise on the Immutability of Moral Truth* (1783) enlightens us with her philosophy. Karen Green writes that, according to Macaulay, 'God has given us improvable faculties […] and the capacity to control our passions so that […]society can progress towards a more perfect state in which individuals will be able to exercise their rationally grounded virtue.'[333] Macaulay in *Moral Truth* explains her heterodox opinions on religion, God's will and human actions but in *Letters on Education* (1790) she adds another topic to the list, education.[334] Therefore, *Letters* lays emphasis on studying intellectual books other than those on theology or Christianity and is a continuation of Macaulay's thoughts from *Moral Truth.*

In my exploration of *Letters* I present how those 'improvable faculties', mentioned by Green, refer to the development of our interpretative skills and how the perusal of various books mentioned in her curriculum in *Letters* help individuals to 'rationally' ground their virtues in order to have a better society. *Letters* has received a variety of criticism because of the 'diverse series of topics' in it.[335] Elizabeth Frazer and Baxipatra, on the one hand, link Macaulay's views on education, virtue, morality and rationality with her views from *The History* on the good governance of a country whereas Catherine Gardner and Connie Titone, on the other hand, associate them with feminism.[336] The latter acknowledge Macaulay as a

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[332] These people discussed parliamentary reforms in England along-with the American politics that deepened and showcased Macaulay's own intellectual interests. Ibid, 7.

[333] Karen Green, 'Reassessing the Impact of the "Republican Virago"', *Redescriptions: Yearbook of Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory*, 19 (2016), p. 38.

[334] Her opinions on religion added to the defamation she had been suffering since her second marriage with James Graham in 1778. Macaulay, aged forty-seven herself, married a twenty-one year old James Graham who was considered as a 'nonentity' in her life. However, her daughter Catherine Sophia wrote to Mr Graham and asked for his well-being during their visit to America in 1784, the only year of some importance of his relationship with Macaulay. Bridget Hill, 'Daughter and Mother; Some New Light on Catharine Macaulay and Her Family', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 22 (1999), pp. 35-49.

[335] Catherine Gardner, 'Catharine Macaulay's "Letters on Education": Odd but Equal', *Hypatia*, 13 (1998), pp. 118-37.

[336] Frazer concludes that 'Macaulay was engaged in direct demands on government: demands for a constitution centred on human dignity and self-government, an administration that reflects republican values,

leading feminist figure of the eighteenth century and identify feminism to be an integral part of her arguments in *Letters*.[337] This chapter takes into consideration the education of her own daughter instead and through a comparative analysis of it with the educational curriculum she prescribes in *Letters* presents the development of interpretative skills, according to Macaulay, to be an integral part of a proper education.

The second epigraph to this chapter which explains how, according to Macaulay, religion worked as an instrument of fear for personal gains by its adherents rather than of actual faith in the eighteenth century is a perfect example to understand the crux of her arguments in *Letters*. Macaulay, like Adam Smith in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), argues that religious principles are 'coerced on the human mind' under the fear of 'damnation in the next' world and that it has 'no grounds either in truth or reason; and is rather mischievous than useful in society'.[338] Furthermore, a supposed exploitation of religion isn't the only basis of her argument; according to her, it is useless for students to indulge in the study of Scriptures 'before they have acquired judgement, or a sufficient literary knowledge to comprehend them thoroughly', and in order to provide them with that literary knowledge or interpretative skills she draws an educational curriculum in *Letters* which enlists the study of certain books and authors necessary before the student indulges in the study of the

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and policies and laws that reward virtue and punish vice.' 'Mary Wollstonecraft and Catharine Macaulay on Education', *Oxford Review of Education*, 37 (2011), p. 614; Baxipatra, also, concludes that 'what emerges from her views on human nature and the role of reason are the scope for perfection both at an individual level and as a society or nation as a whole. The belief in human dignity and the possibility for perfection provided the intellectual foundation for her theory of politics.' 'For Love of Country: History, Nation and Identity in British Women's Writings 1763-1812' (published PhD theses, Indiana University, 2016), p. 52.

[337] Gardner concludes that 'Macaulay is offering a moral vision; not a vision of the end of injustice but a vision of a morally excellent society that would require the equality of women.' 'Catharine Macaulay's "Letters on Education": Odd but Equal', *Hypatia*, 13 (1998), p. 135, pp. 118-37. Titone concludes that women should not 'so readily yield to society's views of their own inferiority' because it is just a public voice and women must learn to reject this public voice. 'Virtue, Reason, and the False Public Voice: Catharine Macaulay's Philosophy of Moral Education', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41 (2009), pp. 91-108, p. 106.

[338] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 322; Smith writes in *Moral Sentiments* that the 'intelligent' or 'mysterious beings' are a result of our own objects of sentiments and passions. 'These natural hopes, fears, and suspicion, were propagated by sympathy and confirmed by education; and the gods were universally represented and believed to be rewarders of humanity and mercy.' Smith, *Moral Sentiments,* p. 164.

Scriptures.[339] Macaulay's curriculum, applicable only for an extraordinary student (either a boy or a girl), restricts the study of religious texts until the student attains the age of twenty one.[340] Furthermore, the educational curriculum seems more practical and less fictional when we witness the upbringing and education of Catherine Sophia, Macaulay's daughter from her first husband. Macaulay develops similar intellectual interests in her daughter which helps us in understanding how her principles remain constantly affixed as an individual and as an author.

Catherine Sophia was born in 1765 and the letters she exchanged with her mother from 1784 to 1791 mention the books she read. This helps us in understanding Macaulay's educational plan in *Letters.* Bridget Hill explores the letters in detail and brings to light issues related to the mother-daughter relationship such as Macaulay's deteriorating health in the 1780s and Sophia's concern for the same. However, I intend to focus on Sophia's education through the books she read and present a direct connection with the books prescribed by Macaulay in *Letters* and the age at which they are meant to be studied. It is to be noted that Sophia, in 1784, was nineteen years of age and had recently started or finished reading the books mentioned below.

1. Madame de Genlis's *Adelaide and Theodore, or, Letters on Education* (1783)
2. James Thomsons's *The Seasons* (1730)
3. Conyers Middleton's *The History of the Life of Marcus Tullius Cicero* (1741)
4. Abbot Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes* (1770)
5. Plutarch's *Lives* (circa 2 A.D.)

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[339] Macaulay, *Letters,* pp. 138-9.

[340] Unlike More who terms women as the 'weaker sex' and writes in *Strictures* that 'let the weaker sex take comfort, that in their very exemption from privileges, which they are sometimes disposed to envy, consists their severity and their happiness.' The privileges More mentions here refer to the education given to boys and the 'learned subjects', as mentioned earlier by Gary Kelly in chapter one, which they are allowed to study. Hannah More, *Strictures*, p. 38.

6. Plato's *Dialogues*
7. Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753)
8. Thomas Stackhouse's *History of the Holy Bible* (1733-37)
9. John Leland's *A View of the Principal Deistical Writers* (1754)
10. Humphrey Prideaux's *The Old and New Testament connected in the History of the Jews and Neighbouring Nations* (1715–17)

Since Macaulay draws heavily from Madame de Genlis's *Adelaide and Theodore* on interpretation in education it is no surprise that the book occupies a place in the library of Catherine Sophia.[341] Madame de Genlis, too, provides an educational plan for children that not only takes us back to 1749 and reminds us of Mrs Teachum's academy where she taught girls in a similar manner but also helps us in understanding how it inspired Macaulay, who composes *Letters on Education* in 1790 and who prescribes yet another similar curriculum for the education of extraordinary children. Similar viewpoints such as on the education of a 'distinguished young person' at the age of fifteen, on the necessity of not reading fairy tales to children, on 'inspiring children with a taste for humble pleasures' or on providing them books that instruct and develop their reasoning skills bridges the arguments on education of these three authors.[342] Explaining and taking into consideration in detail the arguments of the French authoress is not the purpose of this thesis; however, these words by Madame de Genlis explain why it is necessary to teach a distinguished curriculum, as one that is outlined

[341] Macaulay is not only motivated from Genlis but also from Locke and even 'rails at the reviewer', Griffiths, 'for blaming her for ideas that have been taken from Fenelon, Locke, Rousseau, and Genlis' in composing her *Letters.* See Devoney Looser, '"Those Historical Laurels Which Once Graced My Brow Are Now in Their Wane": Catharine Macaulay's Last Years and Legacy', *Studies in Romanticism*, 42 (2003), pp. 203-25, p. 215.

[342] The educational plan is explained in parts in different letters of *Adelaide and Theodore*. However, the above mentioned similarities are presented in Letter-V and Letter-XIV. For further similarities read *Adelaide and Theodore; or, Letters on Education: Containing all the Principles Relative to Three Different Plans of Education; to that of Princes, and to Those of Young Persons of Both Sexes,* 3rd ed., 3 Vols. (London: 1788), pp. 15-63.

by Macaulay or one that was adopted by Fielding, only to a 'distinguished young person' so that he may develop his reasoning and interpretative skills.

> It is necessary […] to adapt the education, of your pupil to his character and disposition; attending only to soften his manners, and to keep his mind calm and tranquil, if he has but a moderate share of understanding; and to raise and elevate his mind, in proportion to the merit and talents you perceive in him.[343]

The last three books mentioned in the list above form a 'series of Theological reading' that were perused by Sophia at the age of twenty only after the approval and the 'advice of both her mother and her uncle' in 1785.[344] It is clear that, according to Macaulay, 'the tender minds of children […] are very little fit for the contemplation of religious subjects' and when, at the age of twenty or more the student consciously chooses to study the Scriptures, 'a great extent of critical knowledge and observation' is necessary. The last three authors mentioned above are approved for perusal by Macaulay because they provide a thorough critical research in their works which, according to her, is not only a strong defence against any literary criticism but also a vital help in the development of interpretative skills.[345] Thus, Macaulay allowed Sophia to read these books because their authors focussed only on explaining, validating, and proving the importance of the Scriptures. Sophia, as a result, was able to acquaint herself with the Scriptures and thoroughly understand, as Macaulay desires

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[343] Ibid, p. 84.

[344] Bridget Hill, 'Daughter and Mother', p. 39.

[345] Macaulay, *Letters,* pp. 89-92; In the preface to *History of the Holy Bible,* Stackhouse explains that 'If I could but answer such Questions and Objections, as Infidelity, in all Ages, has been too ready to suggest against the Truth and Authority of the Scriptures; and, withal, discuss such passages, and illustrate such Facts and Events, as make the most considerable Figure in Holy Writ.' Thomas Stackhouse, *History of the Holy Bible,* 2nd ed., Vol. 1, (London: 1742-44), p. i; In his preface Prideaux mentions that 'The chief design of this History, and my main aim end in writing it, being to clear the way to the better understanding of the holy Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament.' Humphrey Prideaux, *The old and New Testament connected, in the history of the Jews and neighbouring nations, from The Declension of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, to the Time of Christ,* Vol. 1, (Edinburgh: 1799), p. xvi; John Leland, in the preface, explains that 'The method proposed, and for the most part pursued, is this: The several writers are mentioned in the order of time in which they appeared. Some account is given of their writings, and of the several schemes they have advanced.' John Leland, *A view of the principal deistical writers that have appeared in England in the last and present century,* 5th ed., Vol. 1, (London: 1766), p. iv.

in *Letters* for the development of interpretative skills, the meaning of every line in the books she read.

In a similar way as she proceeded with the education of her own daughter Macaulay prescribes the following curriculum for any pupil who shows 'more than ordinary vigour of intellect' in *Letters*.

Age	Recommended Books/Authors
10	Read famous fables in English, Latin and French
12	Plutarch's *Lives* (in English translation), Addison's *Spectator*, Study English Grammar
14	Study French and English Histories (Ferguson and Gibbon) along-with the History of Greece when the language is acquired
15	Study Modern European History
16	Moral lessons from Cicero, Epictetus, Seneca. Poets may be introduced as a diversion from moral lessons but only Milton and Pope along-with Shakespeare, Addison's *Cato,* Steele's *Conscious Lovers*
17	Learn the usage of globes and study Ferguson for astronomy
18	James Harris's *Philosophical Arrangements* along-with Aristotle's *Poetics*
19	Politics through Harrington, Sydney, Locke, Hobbes
20	Study of ancient mythology through Hesiod, Ovid, Blackwell, Bryant
21	Abraham Tucker's *The Light of Nature Pursued*, Ecclesiastical History from Lardner, Mosheim, and the Sacred Writings of Christianity

Since Macaulay states that this curriculum, although only for a distinguished student, is applicable to both boys and girls, it is necessary to explain her reasons for demanding equality in education before understanding her reasons for placing the study of religious text

at the end in this curriculum. She gives 'similar rules for male and female education on the following grounds of reasoning.'[346]

> First, that there is but one rule of right for the conduct of all rational beings; consequently that true virtue in one sex must be equally so in the other, whenever a proper opportunity calls for its exertion; and vice-versa, what is vice in one sex, cannot have a different property when found in the other.
>
> Secondly, that true wisdom, which is never found at variance with rectitude, is as useful to women as to men; because it is necessary to the highest degree of happiness, which can never exist with ignorance.
>
> Lastly, that as on our first entrance into another world, our state of happiness may possibly depend on the degree of perfection we have attained in this, we cannot justly lessen, in one sex or the other, the means by which perfection, that is another word for wisdom, is acquired.[347]

Firstly, Macaulay explains that an individual is identified from his or her actions and 'all rational beings' are capable of exhibiting both virtuous and vicious actions. Secondly, she explains that 'true wisdom' helps in differentiating vices from virtues and if, through separate education, men are taught to develop their reason and wisdom, women, too, have an equal right to that education. If Scriptures alone enable women to become virtuous, men, too, argues Macaulay, should learn the same. According to Macaulay, restricting women to the study of Scriptures can never develop 'true wisdom' since 'ignorance' towards other sources of knowledge limits the scope of not only their intellectual development but also of them developing morality ('rectitude'). Thirdly, Macaulay argues that all 'rational beings' should be provided equal opportunity to develop a certain degree of excellence (wisdom) for the acquisition of happiness. In this last reason, 'the state of happiness' 'on our first entrance into another world' helps us in understanding two things. One, that Macaulay believes in the

[346] Macaulay, *Letters,* pp. 201-02.
[347] Ibid.

afterlife.[348] Two, that her arguments in *Letters* seek only equality in education for men and women and do not present any defence against Christianity or Scriptural beliefs.[349] It is also to be noted that Macaulay does not discard the study of religious texts from her curriculum, instead she argues that they should only be studied after the development of competent interpretative skills and after a certain age. This is discussed in detail below as I explore how Macaulay lays emphasis on the study of the 'ancients' in order to understand the moral lessons of the Gospel. Therefore, equality in education forms the crux of Macaulay's arguments in *Letters.* Next, she explains what type of education must be provided to children and it is clear that she equally prefers the development of the body and the mind of a child through innocent amusements and the perusal of various books respectively. The above mentioned curriculum specifically mentions books necessary for the intellectual development of the child.

In the curriculum, as Mrs Teachum warned her students against the evils of reading fairy tales in *The Governess*, Macaulay explains that 'the sentiments which are to be found in these books do not always correspond with the best morality; and if they did, they affect duties and relations, which are beyond the sphere of a child's knowledge and understanding.'[350] Macaulay lays emphasis on providing books that correspond to a child's age and his learning abilities because 'Aesop's fables', too, according to her, 'were certainly written for the advantage of grown children' but are read by affectionate parents or inexperienced governesses to younger children.[351] Therefore, it is the responsibility of the

[348] In letter IV, too, she writes that the development of the mental and the physical abilities of an individual is necessary for 'happiness and advancement, both in this, and a future state'. Ibid, p. 46.
[349] She argues against the ill objectives of the Church which believed in having a 'strong hold over the imagination' and in making 'men superstitious' so that 'there was no necessity to make them good.' Ibid, p. 71; She further argues against the workings of Sunday Schools because, according to her, their 'method of instruction will hardly serve as an adequate means to protect the innocence of youth.' Ibid, pp. 282-84.
[350] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 54; According to Fielding, fairy tales 'are only introduced to amuse and divert' and according to Madame de Genlis, they 'stop the course of their reasoning, and inspire them with a dislike for instructive reading.' Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 34; Madame de Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore,* pp. 62-3.
[351] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 54.

teacher to properly interpret moralistic lessons from those fairy tales, as is done by Mrs Teachum. With a stern view of this in her mind Macaulay underlines the importance of a meticulous teacher, who, at every stage must accompany and direct the student. She writes,

> Correctness of thought and composition will be acquired by time and labour, but a slowness in the collecting and arranging ideas, will ever attend the generality of persons, who have not been from the beginning been necessitated by the force of authority to use dispatch.[352]

Macaulay explains that knowledge is not gained quickly or instantly, instead it is an everyday process. It requires 'time and labour'. However, the time taken and the effort that is put in, if not done under the proper guidance of a teacher, will not only slow down the learning process but also increase the risk of wrong learning. Macaulay, in naming the teacher as an 'authority', clearly argues that proper guidance must be given 'from the beginning' in order for the child to develop proper interpretative skills or as she terms it, the ability to 'arrange ideas'. Therefore, Macaulay, through her prescribed curriculum and in the above lines, lays emphasis on a proper teacher who would teach necessary subjects in order to develop the child's interpretative skills. Furthermore, this curriculum provides strong evidence that links the principles of Macaulay as a mother and as an author because it includes authors that were read by Sophia such as Plutarch, Plato, Aristotle and John Locke. Plato and Aristotle form part of the 'ancients' who, according to Macaulay, must be studied before the student peruses the sacred texts of Christianity.

Macaulay explains that it is necessary for the student to have a thorough knowledge of the 'philosophical opinions' of the 'ancients' (the stoics and the philosophers before them) along-with the 'knowledge of the systems of religion which prevailed before Christianity' in

[352] Ibid, p. 129.

order to better understand the ethics in the Gospel. Macaulay dedicates the entire part three of *Letters* to establish the interdependence between Stoicism and Christianity. She writes,

> The compositions of the stoics contain such excellent rules of self-government, and of social behaviour, with such a pious reliance on the aid and protection of heaven, and of a perfect resignation and submission to the divine will, that they may be rendered very useful to enable us to carry into practice the commands of the gospel. For without the proper method of disciplining the mind, both reason and faith are vain.[353]

The stoics, like Socrates and Plato, argue that the most important aspect of education must be to discipline the mind.[354] Their various compositions such as *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius or *Discourses of Epictetus and Enchiridion* by Arrian provide 'rules of self-government, and of social behaviour'.[355] However, their doctrines are based, explains Macaulay, on 'a perfect resignation and submission to the divine will'. 'They taught their disciples that to consider every trial to which they were exposed by the accidents of life, as marks of the favour of heaven.'[356] This was the mistake of the stoics, argues Macaulay, because they considered the consequences of every human action as the will of God and this defect 'plainly show the impracticability of establishing any sound system of religion and morals, but on those principles that are consonant to the enlightened reason of man, and which form those of the Christian religion.'[357] Macaulay, therefore, explains that Christian Scriptures not only have rules of government and of social behaviour but also moral lessons that outline the importance of 'reason' along-with 'faith' for the acquisition of virtues and knowledge. Thus,

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[353] Ibid, p. 452.

[354] See my section on the influence of Socratic philosophy on Sarah Fielding from page 82 of chapter one of this thesis.

[355] Macaulay writes that Socrates was 'the father of all the different sects of philosophy'. 'The academic sect of philosophers were founded by his disciple, Plato; and the cynic, by his disciple Antisthenes.' She further writes how Zeno, from the cynics, started the stoic sect which 'was taught in its highest purity and consistence, by Epictetus at Rome, and at Nicopolis in the reign of Domitian.' She then goes on to explain the over-dependence of the stoics on God which was their major drawback. See letters 10, 11 and 12 of part three. Macaulay, *Letters*, pp. 428-53.

[356] Ibid, p. 433.

[357] Ibid, pp. 452-53.

it is necessary for students to learn the 'philosophical opinions of the ancients' in order to properly understand (interpret) the lessons in the Scriptures and that is why she recommends reading the writings of Cicero, Plutarch, Epictetus and Seneca at the age of sixteen and the sacred writings of Christianity at the age of twenty-one.

The reason, according to Macaulay, for studying the ancients before studying the sacred books of Christianity and that too at the age of twenty-one is that:

> The sacred writings put into the hands of youth before they have acquired judgement, or a sufficient literary knowledge to comprehend them thoroughly, must naturally give rise to doubt, and a commerce with the world will afford sufficient matter to increase and confirm these, without the perusal of infidel writers. Lively observations taken from these writers, when flung out in discourse, are better adapted to make a strong impression on the mind of the credulous youth, than a string of arguments logically arranged in an elaborate treatise. Thus the seeds of scepticism are sown in every mind; and though they may not always bring forth the fruits of a confirmed infidelity, they give rise to troublesome doubts; and the Christian, as he calls himself, is willing to compound matters between his reason and his conscience, by never thinking seriously on the subject. On these and similar considerations, I do not introduce the study of the sacred writings 'till pupils have acquired the full vigour of their intellect, 'till they are capable of judging the subjects laid before them with precision, and 'till a full knowledge of the systems of religion which prevailed before Christianity, with the philosophical opinions of the ancients, enable them to discern plainly the advantages of those lights which have been gained by revelation.[358]

Teaching children to critically interpret books is necessary, argues Macaulay, before teachers teach them the sacred writings of Christianity. Without 'sufficient literary knowledge' the perusal of Scriptures will generate 'doubt' and when children converse with people on religious subjects those doubts are further aggravated because the immature reasoning (interpretative) skills of children collide with the definitions of ethics and morality

[358] Ibid, pp. 138-39.

(conscience) of those people.[359] Macaulay's series of letters in *Letters* present arguments between Hortensia and the omniscient narrator on the education of children, and it is Hortensia who calls the writers selected by Macaulay in her curriculum as 'infidel writers'. Thus, Macaulay explains here that without the perusal of these infidel writers a child cannot develop his interpretative skills. Contrary to conversations on religious topics, if the child, argues Macaulay, takes 'lively observations', extracts or ideas 'from these writers' and readily engages with people having similar interests those 'discourses' then will have a 'strong impression' and improve the reasoning skills of the child as a result of regular constructive debates on such topics. 'The seeds of scepticism' or doubt will naturally develop, says Macaulay, even from the perusal of these infidel writers but lively discourses with one's educator or with experienced and intellectual people on a regular basis will remove those 'troublesome doubts'. Here, it is to be noted that Macaulay tries to develop the interpretative skills of children by teaching them to critically understand every part of a book separately whereas More, discussed later in the chapter, tries to develop the interpretative skills of children by teaching them to critically understand every part of Scriptures separately (step two of her interpretation model).[360] Therefore, according to Macaulay, until the students develop a ripened intellect and good judgemental skills the study of Scriptures will not be useful in the acquisition of knowledge.

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[359] 'The powers of understanding' these definitions, argues Macaulay, 'are not sufficiently strong' in children and, therefore, their 'reason loses its energy and become no more than the echo of the public voice. Hence, the task of original thinking is given up; the most absurd prejudices are adopted.' Ibid, p. 152-3. Connie Titone explores 'public voice' in Macaulay's works and explains that reason, unless properly instructed, becomes public voice. 'Virtue, Reason, and the False Public Voice: Catharine Macaulay's Philosophy of Moral Education', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41 (2009), pp. 91–108.

[360] In the preface to the *Letters* Macaulay explains the importance of association in the acquisition of knowledge. When she writes that 'without an adequate knowledge of the power of association, by which a single impression calls up a host of ideas […] it will be impracticable for a tutor to fashion the mind of his pupil according to any particular idea he may frame of excellence', she explains that it is necessary for an educator to provide various sources or books to a student in order for him to gain knowledge by associating ideas from those sources rather than developing an impracticable excellence from one particular source that he himself prefers to be the best. Macaulay, *Letters,* pp. i-ii.

The above analysis explains how Macaulay supports the study of the sacred writings of Christianity when done after the acquisition of critical interpretative skills which, according to her, are acquired with time and after the perusal of various intellectual writers. Until this is achieved, she argues that the role of religion in the education of children must be limited to 'simple and short' prayers along-with weekly visits to the Church.[361] When children, out of curiosity, ask questions on doctrines they are not familiar with 'silence should be obtained by authority […] and assurances, that time, and the progress of study, would improve their understanding and knowledge to their utmost wishes.'[362] Once again Macaulay's words remind us of Mrs Teachum who makes the girls recite prayers at mornings and nights and takes them to the church every Sunday with strict instructions of behaving 'with decency and devotion suitable to the occasion', and which is the most she does to make the girls indulge in acts of devotion and religion.[363] Hannah More, on the other hand, completely rejects the idea of taking children to the Church only on Sundays as she writes, 'One cannot expect much effect from their being coldly told now and then on Sundays, that they must not "love the world, nor the things of the World."[364] According to More, teachers must impart Biblical lessons to the child every day as part of their teaching curriculums so that the child is not baffled when he hears about the irrelevance of attaching one's wishes with 'the things of the World' in the Church on Sundays. More explains that 'the sense which Christian parents would wish to impress on their children' about 'the world, is to know its emptiness, its vanity, its futility, and its wickedness', and it is this knowledge which, according to Macaulay, is unfit for children in their infancy.[365] Thus, the ideals of Macaulay and those of More contradict each other not only on the proper age for studying Scriptures

[361] Ibid, pp. 90-1.
[362] Ibid, p. 95.
[363] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 83.
[364] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, pp. 142-43.
[365] Ibid, p. 143.

but also on the type of knowledge Scriptures provide which, again, according to Macaulay, is beyond the comprehension of children with immature interpretative skills.

This is the primary difference between *Strictures* and *Letters* regarding the education of children and reasonably the cause of More's hatred for Macaulay which she expressed in her letter to Mrs Boscawen in 1782. More openly expresses her feelings against Macaulay in the letter and writes,

> You see, my dear madam, the extent of your influence over me. "Go to Bath," said you, "if you have a return of your complaint." To Bath I came, et me voiçi rétablie! But I do not at all like this foolish frivolous place, and shall leave it as soon as the nymph of the spring permits.
>
> Being here naturally reminds me to speak of Mrs Macaulay. I feel myself extremely scandalized at her conduct, and yet I did not esteem her; I knew her to be absurd, vain, and affected, but never could have suspected her of the indecent and, I am sorry to say, profligate turn which her late actions and letters have betrayed. The men do so rejoice and so exult, that it is really provoking: yet have they no real cause for triumph; for this woman is far from being any criterion by which to judge of the whole sex; she was not feminine either in her writings or her manners; she was only a good, clever man. Did I ever tell you, my dear madam, an answer her daughter once made me? Desirous, from civility, to take some notice of her, and finding she was reading Shakespeare, I asked her if she was not delighted with many parts of King John? "I never read the *kings*, ma'am," was the truly characteristic reply.[366]

In this letter More hints towards the year 1778 because Macaulay faced great ridicule and criticism as a result of her marriage with James Graham in the same year. The marriage of a forty-seven year old Macaulay with a twenty-one year old Graham raised many eyebrows as people considered it an act of indecency and a 'scandalized conduct'. More, too, condemns these 'late actions' of Macaulay as 'absurd' and even criticizes her *The History of England from the Revolution to the Present Time in a Series of Letters to a Friend* (1778) as 'profligate' because it does not represent any feminine ideas. However, it is to be noted that

[366] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, pp. 136-37.

the writings of Hannah More were also criticized on similar grounds by her peers.[367] Macaulay was greatly praised for the five volumes of *The History of England* which was written prior to her marriage with Graham but More considers her writing abilities, in the letter above, 'far from being any criterion by which to judge of the whole sex'.[368] More, also, comments on the education of Macaulay's daughter, Catherine Sophia, who, according to her, follows in the footsteps of her mother. Sophia, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, read various books but only after the approval of her mother. From *Adelaide and Theodore* she learnt that odious characters in plays make 'children forget the unravelling of the plot, and the moral to be drawn from it' if not supervised by their parents or teachers, and that Shakespeare's *King John* had many such characters.[369] Since Macaulay's *Letters* presents similarities with Madame de Genlis's *Adelaide and Theodore* on the reading of plays by children Catherine Sophia's reply to Hannah More, in the letter above, is 'truly characteristic' of her mother as More notices. Therefore, More openly expresses her disdain for Macaulay and her ideals in this letter.[370] For the purpose of this thesis and for a better understanding of the conflicting ideas of Hannah More and Catharine Macaulay on religion the section below explores why More considers the Bible to be an appropriate subject for children to study at an early age.

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[367] Mrs Boscawen writes to More in 1780 that 'Mrs Walsingham has been reading your essays, and likes them (especially that on Education) as much as I promised her she would; but on the threshold she stumbled, and wrote me word that Lady Denbeigh and she were in the greatest wrath against you for allowing the men so much the superiority.' Ibid, p. 113. Also, in her *Strictures* she clearly differentiates between the education of men and women.

[368] Refer to footnote 334 of this chapter.

[369] Stéphanie Félicité, Comtesse de Genlis, *Adelaide and Theodore; or, Letters on Education: Containing all the Principles Relative to Three Different Plans of Education; to that of Princes, and to Those of Young Persons of Both Sexes,* 3rd ed., 3 Vols. (London: 1788), p. 146.

[370] Macaulay explains that when children recite speeches they do not understand from plays, they are no more than an 'imitative parrot' who speaks without knowing the meaning of his own words. She writes that the child 'can only give an affected tone to words he does not understand, and to sentiments he never felt, he can afford no real satisfaction to any auditor of taste.' Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 57.

HANNAH MORE

A highly educated philanthropist and a member of the Bluestocking group of the eighteenth century Hannah More has a long list of critics. Olivia Smith disparages her thought process and Mona Scheuermann considers her as an adversary of women in view of her support for male superiority.[371] Johanna Wharton and Emily Rena-Dozier explore the 'material psychology' of More and criticize her for considering charity as the only 'activity' that can take women 'out of the confines of the drawing room' and help them in 'realizing a great deal about the character of those around them.'[372] The works of Mitzi Myers and Harriet Guest consider the Evangelicalism of Hannah More and the radical Feminism of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) as pioneering opposites in tracing the history of women's education in the eighteenth century and present a series of arguments of these two authors for the development of women's reasoning capabilities, or in the words of Adela Ramos, their 'quintessential faculty'.[373] In writing the biography of Hannah More Anne Stott explores her Sunday School project in which she formed various women's societies in order to provide them shelter and food.[374] Kerri Louise Andrews explores the poems of Hannah More in the context of the abolition of the Slave Trade in Britain in the eighteenth century. She reads More's educational discourse in *Strictures* as an acceptance of women's inferiority to men and writes, 'More makes clear, poor women are not to gain any power through fulfilling their

[371] Olivia Smith, *The Politics of Language 1791-1819*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Mona Scheuermann, 'Ferocious Countenances: The Upper Classes Look at the Poor', *The Age of lohnson,* 11 (2000), pp. 53-79.
[372] Joanna Wharton, *'*Lasting Associations: The Material Psychology of Anna Letitia Barbauld, Hannah More, and Elizabeth Hamilton' (published PhD theses, University of York, 2014), p. 189; Emily Rena-Dozier, 'Hannah More and the Invention of Narrative Authority', *ELH*, 71 (2004), p. 220.
[373] See Mitzi Myers, 'Reform or Ruin: "A Revolution in Female Manners"', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 11 (1982), 199-216; Harriet Guest, 'The Dream of a Common Language: Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft', *Textual Practice,* 9 (1995), 303-23; Adela Ramos, 'Species Thinking: Animals, Women, and Literary Tropes in Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 37 (2018), p. 42.
[374] Anne Stott, *Hannah More: The First Victorian* (Oxford: OUP, 2004). Also, see More's letter to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Dr Beadon, in 1801 in which she explains the meetings of these societies. Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 2, pp. 67-75.

roles as wives and mothers; they are rather to accept their positions.'[375] Therefore, Hannah More's life and works, as these critics show, succumb to a variety of criticism; however, there are certain unexplored aspects in her works that help us in further understanding how she kept religion and education under the same roof, aspects which I present in this section.

In this section I explore the ambivalent educational beliefs of Hannah More with respect to her *Strictures* that provide a direct contrast with the type of education she herself received as a child. Jane Nardin offers a distinctive perspective of More's works, especially *Strictures,* and discusses how Hannah More desired 'everything' to be taught to the 'future wife, mother, and mistress of a family' but leaves out More's ambivalent educational plan of her own schools where she restricts the education to learning the Bible and fundamental writing exercises. [376] This section explores in detail not only More's educational plan (the three-step interpretation model) in *Strictures* in light of the educational plan she follows in her own Sunday Schools but also her attitude towards religion (her entry into Evangelicalism) as is seen in the first epigraph to this chapter. More's religious concerns require a deeper study than a brief mention by Kerri Andrews of her friendship with Rev John Newton because their friendship serves as an important link in understanding her entry into Evangelicalism which ultimately affected her writings. This section explores the exchange of letters between the two and seeks to understand why More became an Evangelical on the advice of Rev Newton in 1787.[377] *Strictures* undoubtedly presents More's misogynistic approach towards the education of women as has been explored by these critics but it is also

[375] Kerri Louise Andrews, 'Patronage and Professionalism in the Writings of Hannah More, Charlotte Smith and Ann Yearsley, 1770-1806' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2006), p. 31.
[376] Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Rhetoric of Educational Reform', *Women's History Review*, 10 (2001), pp. 211–28.
[377] I say 1787 because she writes on September 28, 1794 in her diary that 'It is now, I think five years since I have been enabled, by the grace of God, in a good degree to give up all human studies. I have not allowed myself to read any classic or pagan author for many years' Also, her writings transformed from being literary to being religious after with the publication of *Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great, to General Society: An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World* in 1788. Roberts, *Memoirs,* p. 453.

necessary to understand what alternate method she suggests for their development in the society. A Christian education is her central argument and the theme of interpretation, hitherto unexplored, is what I aim to explore in her proposed teaching curriculum in *Strictures*. In order to understand More's emphasis on interpretation of Scriptures in *Strictures* it is necessary to understand her religious life, how it began, who influenced her and in what way her education till the age of twenty along-with her literary development later on contradicts her own prescribed educational plan in *Strictures.* The below paragraphs primarily divide and present the life of Hannah More before and after 1787, an important year which marked her entry into Evangelicalism.

As was the case for Sarah Fielding, More's friends and peers played a significant role in her intellectual development. Her parents took the utmost care in providing a diverse education to their children and Hannah More at the age of eight received personal lessons in Greek history from her father Jacob More. He read to her speeches of the Greek heroes, sometimes from books and at other times from his own memory.[378] At the age of twelve she read the *Spectator* and learnt French from her eldest sister, Mary, who was 'in charge of a small Ladies' school at Bristol' and who visited home on weekends.[379] However, her education from the age of sixteen to twenty presents a striking contrast with the educational plan she prescribes in *Strictures* in which she asks young girls to read Scriptures for the acquisition of virtues and knowledge despite maintaining a fair distance from religious readings herself during this time of her own life.

[378] More's reply to Horace Walpole's letter in June 1787 in which she interprets and explains to him the character of Brutus as one full of compassion rather than of patriotism exemplifies and helps us in understanding her emphasis on interpretation in the perusal of books learnt from her father. She writes, 'I never considered the patriotic Brutus with any delight as the assertor of freedom, and as *refulgent from the stroke of Caesar's fate;* no, it is the gentle, compassionate Brutus that engages my affection, who refused to disturb the slumbers of the poor boy who attended him in that anxious night, when he destroyed himself, and so much needed his services.' Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, p. 267.

[379] Walter S. Scott, *The Bluestocking Ladies,* (London: John Green and Co., 1947), p. 123.

Hannah More met Thomas Sheridan and James Ferguson at the age of sixteen at her sister's school in Bristol.[380] She was immediately attracted to their knowledge of the world which reflected their intellectual excellence and which subsequently inspired her to write a play, *Search after Happiness*, in the following year of 1762.[381] Here, it is to be noted that it wasn't just the intellectual excellence of famous personalities that caught More's eye, rather it was the knowledge and the intellect itself that she was after. An example of this is visible in her friendship with Mr Peach. She admired his 'extraordinary sagacity and cultivated intellect' and even ranked him alongside Sheridan and Ferguson in those aspects.[382] Until the age of eighteen More was 'devoted to poetry, literature, and intellectual amusement.'[383] At the age of twenty she learned Italian, Latin and Spanish and her literary circle included Dean Tucker, Dr Ford and Dr James Stonehouse all of whom focused on and preferred Christianity to be an integral part of children's education.[384] Three things are of the utmost importance here which not only unveil More's emphasis on interpretation but also strengthen my claim of

[380] Thomas Sheridan was a famous Irish actor who emphasized on proper delivery of speech and later became a major proponent of the Elocution Movement through his *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (1762). James Ferguson, a self-educated man, on the other hand, was a famous Scottish astronomer and an itinerant lecturer. In *Lectures on Elocution,* Sheridan explains the importance of speech, gestures and emotions for communication and criticizes preachers for their incompetent preaching. For further reading on Sheridan's *Elocution* read Philippa M. Spoel, 'Rereading the Elocutionists: The Rhetoric of Thomas Sheridan's *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* and John Walker's *Elements of Elocution*', *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 19 (2001), pp. 49-91.

[381] In the play she 'attempts to combine', as Nardin observes, 'a romance with an anti-romance and produces some unintentional comic effects.' Irrespective of focussing on the moral behaviour of characters in the play she does not lay emphasis on them following Christian principles which hints towards a non-religious influence of Sheridan and Ferguson on More. 'Avoiding the Perils of the Muse: Hannah More, Didactic Literature, and Eighteenth-Century Criticism', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 36 (2000), pp. 377-91.

[382] He was a linen-draper who helped David Hume, during his two-year stay at Bristol, edit *The History of England.* Hume's *History* (1754-62) went into competition with Macaulay's *History* (1763-83) as both writers presented dynamic commentary in their respective representations of England. Roberts, *Memoirs*, p. 20.

[383] On April 13, 1803 she writes in her diary, repenting the death of an old friend of hers, some Mr L, that 'our acquaintance began when I was eighteen: we were both devoted to poetry, literature, and intellectual amusement- his was a singular character', and then finishes the entry with a brief description of his life. Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 104.

[384] Josiah Tucker (1713-1799) was the Dean of Gloucester who published works against Methodism and became famous in Bristol for favouring the naturalisation of foreigners in the 1750s. Dr Stonehouse (1716-1795) was the neighbour of Hannah More. His *Spiritual Instructions* (1748), *Religious Instruction of Children Recommended* (1774) are some of the famous works on the importance of teaching religion to children at an early age.

how she kept religious sentiments at a distance until 1787. This is the first time, through Dean Tucker and Dr Stonehouse, that More is introduced to the importance of religion in education.[385] Secondly, Hannah More is introduced to this importance of a religious education at the age of twenty.[386] Lastly, like a true scholar More peruses various religious texts on the recommendation of Tucker and Stonehouse, understands them and scholastically interprets them rather than accepting them as the word of God. An example of this is visible in her letter to one of her sisters in 1781 in which she explains how Dr Johnson reproved her for reading Catholic authors. She writes, 'He reproved me with pretended sharpness for reading *Les Pensées de Pascal* or any of the Port Royal authors, alleging that, as a good Protestant, I ought to abstain from books written by Catholics.'[387] In an informal gathering, two years after the death of David Garrick in 1779, Johnson criticized More for reading the Catholic Port-Royal authors- Antoine Arnauld, Pierre Nicole and Blaise Pascal. However, Johnson's remark helps in understanding Hannah More's scholastic approach towards religion which derives from a relatively free engagement with a broad range of different religious texts. More was unable to provide Johnson with a reply as he grieved the death of Garrick soon after his remark which left no room for any debate. Therefore, it becomes clear that until 1781 More read books on religion but had not incorporated within herself any stern religious sentiments. The exploration of her literary life in London in which David Garrick and Rev Newton played an important role further helps in understanding my claim of how she did not commit to a particular kind of religious life until 1787.

[385] Although Jacob More was a religious person and educated his daughters according to Christian principles, More's introduction to religion here refers to an academic reading of the Bible and understanding from Tucker and Stonehouse on the importance of religion in education.
[386] Her age is of importance here as Catharine Macaulay, discussed earlier, recommends the study of religious texts only after the student attains the age of twenty.
[387] Roberts, *Memoirs,* p. 132.

In 1772 More first visited London where she met with, as Walter Scott remarks, 'a bag of lions' namely Edmund Burke, David Garrick, Dr Johnson, Dr Percy and Rev John Newton.[388] She was charmed with London's exquisite buildings and puzzled at the same time, as she wrote to Mrs Gwatkin, with its fashion that took the Londoners away from the simplicity of life, of the country-life that More enjoyed at Cowslip Green.[389] When in 1773 she was called for an interview with David Garrick he introduced her to the Bluestocking Queen, Mrs Elizabeth Montagu, and to Dr Johnson. In the subsequent years she acquainted herself with the other members of the Bluestockings and enjoyed having 'reasoning conversations' with them.[390] In order to fit in and find her own worth in her London literary circle More wrote a tale, *Sir Eldred of the Brower* in 1775 which was enthusiastically received by her peers to the extent that Edmund Burke, Mrs Macaulay and Dean Tucker contacted her for a general discussion on it.[391] More visited London several times since 1772 and her intellectual or reasoning conversations sometimes with the 'bag of lions' and at other times with the Bluestockings strengthened her friendships with them, and in particular with David Garrick.[392] Her admiration for the actor, as was Sarah Fielding's for Richardson, converted their friendship into that of a teacher and a student as she accepted Garrick as the one to 'direct and nurse' her 'dramatic muse'.[393] It was the actor and his dedication towards

[388] Walter Scott, *The Bluestocking Ladies*, p. 125.
[389] She describes her place of stay to Mrs Gwatkin in 1772 and writes that 'there is a pretty picture-gallery, the pieces mostly Dutch; the apartments are small, and rather oddly than magnificently furnished.' William Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, p. 35.
[390] Feeling herself a 'worm', she considered Mrs Montagu as the 'finest genius', Mrs Carter as 'polite, learned, judicious', Mrs Scott as 'a very good writer'. Ibid, p. 39, 45, 53.
[391] It became the talk of the town and 'the theme of conversation in all polite circles' as More received much praise for her 'dedication'. Mrs Montagu expressed a deep regard for the tale and the poem of *The Bleeding Rock* that was attached to it and wrote to More that 'Your Rock will stand unimpaired by ages, as eminent as any in the Grecian Parnassus'. Ibid, pp. 43-4.
[392] From chapter two of *Memoirs* we come to know that Hannah More was slowly and slowly entering the Bluestockings circle. In 1773 she was called for an interview with David Garrick who introduced her to Mrs Montagu. Their talked about Richardson on their way to Samuel Johnson's mansion. In 1775 she met Mrs Carter, Mrs Boscawen, Mrs Chapone and discussed topics such as true wisdom and the importance of being wise. Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, pp. 44-58.
[393] Ibid, p. 45.

his art which was praised even by the Bluestockings that caught the eye of the More sisters in London.[394] Although the correspondence of Hannah More and David Garrick, full of praises for each other, provide little information on the latter's intellectual and moral influence on the former, it becomes clear from a brief study of Garrick's correspondence with other people that he willingly chose not to partake in any political or religious conversations.[395] This nature of his helps in understanding, for the purpose of this thesis, that there existed a scholarly and an intellectual form of friendship between Garrick and More, a friendship that motivated her to develop her literary skills without paying much attention to religious opinions or indulging in religious conversations at gatherings. However, religion and religious sentiments were coerced into her mind and into her literary pursuit by other members of the London literary circle in the form of consolatory letters after Garrick's death in 1779. Thus ended the scholarly life of Hannah More in 1779 and now I will present the rise of 'Holy Hannah', as Horace Walpole used to call her, in which Rev John Newton played an important part.[396]

When Jane Nardin observes that 'during the late 1780s and the 1790s, her concerns grew more religious and she became a passionate adherent of the Evangelical movement', we understand that Hannah More was less concerned with religion or the Evangelical movement before the 1780s (before Garrick's death) but we are not provided with any explicit reasons

[394] Mrs Montagu writes to More in 1779 that 'His untainted morals in a situation exposed to temptation, his perfect rectitude of conduct through the whole course of his life, his amiable and kind domestic behaviour, his generosity and fidelity to his relations, and his charity to the poor and distressed, will ever be remembered by the age in which he lived, and recorded to ages to come.' ibid, p. 93. Even Rev Thomas Newton in 1741 praises Garrick's acting and writes, 'The thing that strikes me above all others, is that variety in your acting, and your being so totally different a man in Lear from what you are in Richard.' Newton points at Garrick's dedication which, in the course of his life, brought him recognition, fame and respect. *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick,* 2nd ed. Vol.1, (London: Sold by all booksellers, 1835), p. 7.

[395] Garrick primarily focuses on telling More his whereabouts as he travelled outside London in 1776. In one of the letters, and the only one related to work, he explains to More the delay caused in writing a prologue to a play that More was then working on. Ibid, pp. 68-76; 'Political discussions', writes Arthur Murphy, 'he wished to avoid. If the company chose those subjects, he listened with politeness, but was guarded in what he said.' Arthur Murphy, *The Life of David Garrick,* Vol. 2, (London: 1801), p. 171.

[396] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 2, p. 443.

for this change.[397] More, along-side Mrs Garrick-because she became an intimate friend of the family- lamented the death of David Garrick at her house. Both received consolatory letters from their peers and it were those letters which served as the stepping stones of More's entry into Evangelicalism. The letters, reflecting in themselves the spirit of Christianity, suggested to More and to Mrs Garrick to ask for strength from God in order to overcome their grief. As a result, Mrs Garrick said to More one day that 'The goodness of God to me is inexpressible; I desired to die, but it is His will that I should live […] He gives astonishing strength to my body, and grace to my heart.'[398] On another day, Mrs Montagu, expressing similar feelings, wrote to More that 'I heard with great satisfaction of the resignation with which dear Mrs Garrick behaved, and doubt not but she will be supported by that great Being to whose will she submits.'[399] Such remarks made Hannah More contemplate the power of faith in overcoming, as Dean Tucker called it, 'dark times'.[400] The letters, therefore, increased More's interest in religion as she started perusing religious texts not with a scholarly eye, unlike earlier when she read Catholic authors along-with the Protestants in order to develop her reasoning skills, but from the perspective of an Evangelical. After reading nine hundred pages of Mr Madan's book (a religious text) she writes to her sister that 'I believe the Holy Scriptures were never before made the cover, nay, the *vehicle,* of so much indecency.'[401] Her observations became less and less discreet as she read more books on Christianity but the change in 'her concerns' was not yet complete as she wrote to Mrs Boscawen in 1781 that 'Reason, religion, and time, when they come to operate, do wonders, such wonders as the sufferer in the first attack of sorrow has no conception of.'[402] More's usage of the words

[397] Jane Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Rhetoric of Educational Reform', *Women's History Review*, 10 (2001), pp. 211–28.
[398] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, pp. 90-1.
[399] Ibid, 93.
[400] The death of Hermes Harris in 1781 added to her grief and like Mrs Montagu, she too found refuge in the Scriptures.
[401] Roberts, *Memoirs*, p. 117.
[402] Ibid, p. 120.

reason and religion is important in understanding her transformation. The initial preference of reason for More is visible not only in its placement before the word religion in the above sentence but also through the books she read. Irrespective of being a Protestant, More read Blaise Pascal's *Pensées* and other books written by the Catholic Port-Royal authors, Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole, which signified the traits of a true intellectual in her.[403] However, the religious consolatory remarks made by Mrs Garrick and others slowed More's literary pursuit as they added the subject of religion to her initial scholarly life.

Until 1787 More continued contemplating this newly acquired knowledge of the power of Scriptures and would have held on to reason for the acquisition of virtues and morals if not for Rev John Newton whose advice became the final catalyst in her transformation. John Newton, who called himself the 'old African blasphemer', according to Anne Stott, was a slaver turned Christian.[404] His friendship with Hannah More developed during their fight against the Slave Trade in Britain in the 1780s. Newton's 'Thoughts Upon the African Slave Trade' and More's 'Slavery: A Poem' were published alongside each other. Both writers, observes Kerri Andrews, 'relied heavily on their evangelical Christianity to demonstrate the wrongs of the slave trade.'[405] More, as a result of their corresponding ideals, lays forth her doubts and asks,

> I want to know, dear sir, if it is peculiar to myself to form ideal plans of perfect virtue, and to dream of all manner of imaginary goodness in untried circumstances, while one neglects the immediate duties of one's actual situation?[406]

The most important remark that is visible in the above lines is that More questions the principles of Christianity which offer salvation on the basis of faith. The 'imaginary goodness

[403] See footnote 387 and the explanation that follows.
[404] Anne Stott, *Hannah More*, p. 82.
[405] Andrews, 'Patronage and Professionalism in the Writings of Hannah More, Charlotte Smith and Ann Yearsley, 1770-1806' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2006), p. 73.
[406] Roberts, *Memoirs*, p. 276.

in untried circumstances' refers to acts of faith in this world in order to achieve salvation in the next. More questions this principle and asks if forming a perfect picture of the next world and adjusting our actions accordingly is better than performing actions as a dutiful citizen. It is to be noted that More retired to Cowslip Green in 1781 to overcome the death of Mr Garrick and sometimes lamented the loss of 'intercourse of ordinary society' which forms the base of her argument in the letter to Rev Newton.[407] However, the Reverend's reply satisfied More's uncertainty and its effects are visible in her later life as she turned to Evangelicalism. He wrote,

> In such a world as this, and with such a nature as ours, there will be a call for habitual self-denial. We must learn to cease from depending upon our own supposed wisdom, power, and goodness, and from self-complaisance and self-seeking, that we may rely upon Him whose wisdom and power are infinite.[408]

This reply from Rev Newton is crucial for understanding the later life of Hannah More and why she incorporates a similar message in *Strictures.* Like a true Calvinist, Newton begins by criticizing the society of the eighteenth century which, according to him, was losing all its morality as a result of the corrupt human nature. He clearly asks More to seek refuge in God and to undervalue all her present knowledge gained from books, wisdom gained from experience and goodness gained from the society of intellectual friends. Human knowledge, he preaches, is always insufficient and adherence to Christian principles in all stages of life is the only way to attain salvation.

Prior to the death of Mr Garrick More was actively engaged in reading religious texts, both by the Protestants and the Catholics, and was always critical of any wrong presentation

[407] More wrote to Mr Pepys in 1784, after her retirement to Cowslip Green, how she spent her time 'rambling about the romantic hills' which inspired her to write odes but was more indisposed for the loss of 'the enjoyment of the intercourse of the ordinary society.' Ibid, p. 198.
[408] Ibid, p. 279.

or representation in them which reflected the spirit of a true scholar in her.[409] However, the consolatory letters she received after the death of Mr Garrick motivated her for studying Scriptures more often than before which raised even further doubts in her mind and she turned to Rev Newton, a friend from the revolt against the Slave Trade, for answers. Newton's remarks assisted Hannah More's entry into Evangelicalism. Her beliefs were ultimately altered from developing reason to attaining salvation as she accepted how 'imperfect' this world was and how 'experience is a sort of substitute for wisdom' when one distanced oneself from the perusal of the Scriptures.[410] Enlightened with this new knowledge More anonymously published *Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society* in 1788 and wrote to her sister from London that,

> Fine people are ready enough to join you in reprobating vice; for they are not *all* vicious; but their standard of right is low, it is not the standard of the Gospel. In this little book I have not gone deep; it is but a superficial view of the subject; it is confined to prevailing practical evils. Should this succeed, I hope by the blessing of God, another time to attack more strongly the *principle.*[411]

Through this book Hannah More, for the first time, tried her hand at religious writing. Her main aim in writing this book was to experiment with the type of reception it gets because, according to her, starting 'religious topics' in a society in order to 'extract from common subjects some useful and awful truth' was not easy.[412] Thus, she focussed only on describing the common subjects of practical evils from the Gospel in her book and awaited a response from the public. More's later compositions on religion and religious topics substantiate the

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[409] More criticizes the New Testament and writes that it requires 'the strong basis of the Old Testament to give firmness and validity to the New.' More, *Strictures,* p. 397.

[410] She begins her diary on December 23, 1803 with 'Oh What an imperfect world it is!' and asks for strength from God in her time of illness. Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, p. 110; In her letter to William Wilberforce in 1823 she expresses her discontent towards 'the great national schools' and 'the little paltry cottage seminaries' that teach science and literature along-with accounting. It is here that she criticizes the governors of such institutions whose experience is substituted for wisdom in teaching everything to the poor rather than focussing on teaching the Bible. Ibid, p. 360

[411] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, p. 280.

[412] Ibid.

positive response she received and for the first time after the publication of *Thoughts* we witness the change in her writings that went from being literary to being religious.[413] Also, her interest in studying religious books from the point of view of a Christian (Evangelical) only grew more and more from here on as in her letter to Mrs Kennicott in 1789 she writes that some of the compositions of Mr Burgess 'are at present my chief study; not however, those which procure admiration, or gain fame: for the Salisbury Spelling Book and the Parochial Exercises are those which at present attract my attention'.[414] Therefore, I have shown how the literary life of Hannah More ended in 1779 and how her religious life began thereafter with the coming of Rev Newton into her life. Next, I present the type of education More imparted in her Sunday Schools which she started in 1789. This will further help in understanding how she represented ambivalent educational beliefs in her writings, especially in *Strictures.*

The setting up of schools for poor children in villages such as Cheddar, Shipham or Rowbarrow 'of this hardly Christian country', for so were her words, was not an easy job for the More sisters.[415] They faced social, financial and administrative problems. The villagers accused them of being Methodists and were 'negligent in sending their children' to their schools.[416] However, with much effort they 'hired an old vicarage house' and converted it into a Sunday school. The next problem lay with the appointment of teachers or mistresses. More desired a 'knowing, industrious, religious' woman who must not be a Methodist

[413] Her earlier works include *A Search After Happiness* (1762), , *The Inflexible Captive* (1774)*,* Sir Eldred of the Brower with The Bleeding Rock (1775), *Percy* (1777)*, Fatal Falsehood* (1779), *Sacred Dramas* (1783), The Bas Bleau (1786). For a brief understanding of all these texts read Jane Nardin, 'Avoiding the Perils of the Muse: Hannah More, Didactic Literature, and Eighteenth-Century Criticism', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 36 (2000), pp. 377-91.
[414] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, p. 341.
[415] Ibid.
[416] Ibid, p. 339.

because the villagers disliked them.[417] The problem of ordering 'a quantity of New Testaments, Prayer-books, and little Sunday-school books, with a few Bibles' was somehow resolved with the help of Mr Wilberforce who was a member of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK).[418] It is to be kept in mind that in setting up these schools More aimed at providing salvation to the poor by teaching them the Bible rather than aiming for their intellectual development. She conveys this message to Mr Wilberforce when she writes to him that 'if but one soul is rescued from eternal misery, how may we rejoice over it in another state.'[419] This is the curriculum that she followed in her schools,

> In the morning I open school with one of the Sunday-school prayers, from the Cheap Repository Tract. I have a Bible class-Testament class-Psalter class. Those who cannot read at all, are questioned out of the first little question book for the Mendip schools. In instructing the Bible or Testament class, I always begin with the Parables, which we explain to them in the most familiar manner, one at a time, till they understand that one so perfectly that they are able to give me back the full sense of it.
>
> We begin with the three parables in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, first fixing in their minds the literal sense, and then teaching them to make the practical application. When their understandings are a little exercised we dwell for a long time on the three first chapters of Genesis, endeavouring from these to establish them in the doctrine of the fall of man. We keep them a good while close to the same subject, making them read the same parts so often, that the most important texts shall adhere to their memories; because upon this knowledge only can I ground my general conversation with them so as to be intelligible. I also encourage them by little bribes of a penny a chapter, to get by heart certain fundamental parts of Scripture […] Those who attend four Sundays without intermission, and come in time for morning prayer, receive a penny every fourth Sunday; but if they fail once, the other three Sundays go for nothing, and they must begin again. Once in every six or eight weeks I give a little gingerbread.[420]

[417] In a letter to Wilberforce in 1789 she writes, 'As to the mistress of the *Sunday*-school, and the religious part I have employed Mrs Easterbrook […] I hope Miss W. will not be frightened, but I am afraid she must be called a Methodist. Ibid, p. 340.
[418] Ibid, p. 345.
[419] Ibid, p. 344.
[420] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 2, p. 82.

This is the point from where I explore her ambivalent educational beliefs as reflected in the curriculum of her schools and in the curriculum she presents in *Strictures.* In *Strictures* she lays emphasis on understanding the moral lessons in the Bible through a critical interpretation of every line whereas in her Sunday schools she prioritized the learning of every line of the Bible over understanding or interpreting its meaning. The perfect understanding of the parables by children that More explains in the lines above refers to them memorising not only the lines from the Bible but also them memorising the meaning of those lines in order to receive the prize attached to it. More encouraged her students 'by little bribes of a penny a chapter' but quotes John Locke in *Strictures* in order to explain the importance of developing the interest of the student in the subject for a better understanding of lessons. Such contradicting examples in her work and her real life help in understanding how 'under the mask of religion' she indulged her 'own humours and resentments' as mentioned in the first epigraph to this chapter. The below section explores her three-step interpretation model in *Strictures* which perfectly exemplifies that epigraph.

STRICTURES ON THE MODERN SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION (1799)

Hannah More makes it very clear in *Strictures* that the education of men and women, 'whatever be her rank', must differ.[421] The difference in their intellectual excellence, according to her, confines women to the territory of the household whereas men are not only independent but also 'destined to some professions' outside the household.[422] Work within the household is the only 'station' of life that suits women's capabilities and 'women', argues More, 'who are so puffed up with the conceit of talents as to neglect the plain duties of life' attract ridicule as a result of their false pretentious education. This education or 'the prevailing system' of education that fills the minds of women with a sense of entitlement

[421] Ibid, p. 2.
[422] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 106.

requires, according to More, a religious remedy and her *Strictures* explain it in detail.[423] It lays emphasis not only on teaching Scriptures to children in their early childhood but also on teaching them to critically interpret the Scriptures. Prior to understanding More's three-step interpretation model of Scriptures it is necessary to understand her emphasis on the religious education of children.

More's text acknowledges the influence of John Locke, quoting him often. As Locke urges the educator 'to settle in his pupil good habits, and the principles of virtue and wisdom', so does Hannah More requires the formation of 'a correct taste and a sound judgement' in her student. The following quotations, from Locke and from More respectively, help us in further understanding this imitation.

> The great work of a governor is to fashion the carriage, and form the mind; to settle in his pupil good habits, and the principles of virtue and wisdom; to give him, by little and little, a view of mankind; and work him into a love and imitation of what is excellent and praise-worthy; and, in the prosecution of it, to give him vigour, activity, and industry.[424]
>
> The great business of education be to implant ideas, to communicate knowledge, to form a correct taste and a sound judgement, to resist evil propensities, and, above all, to seize the favourable season for infusing principles and confirming habits.[425]

Locke considers childhood as a 'carriage' which must be directed with good habits and infused with 'principles of virtue and wisdom'. Similarly, More lays emphasis on providing proper instructions in childhood because it is the most 'favourable season' for teaching good habits and establishing directive principles (ideas which, as I will go on to show, are also outlined by Macaulay). Furthermore, as Locke asks his governor to 'form the mind' of the child by teaching him to interpret and pursue 'excellent and praise-worthy' sources of

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[423] Ibid, p. 63.
[424] Postulate 93 in John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education,* ed. by John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 53-4.
[425] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 63.

knowledge, so does Hannah More requires a good educator to 'implant ideas' and to 'communicate' his varied knowledge in order for the child to develop a 'sound judgement' in differentiating useful sources of knowledge from those that are less useful. Thus, More's words echoes Locke's but the influence only extends so far.

According to Locke, the student, from different sources or subjects provided by his governor, gathers a general 'view of mankind' whereas, according to More, the skill of 'sound judgement' to 'resist evil propensities' can be gained only from the Scriptures.[426] We understand this as More replaces, in the same chapter, her emphasis on ideas in the above quotation with a greater emphasis on religion. She writes,

> Should we not reflect also, that we are neither to train up Amazons nor Circassians, but it is our business to form Christians? That we have to educate not only rational, but accountable beings? […] In training them, should we not carefully cultivate intellect, implant religion, and cherish modesty? Then, whatever is engaging in manners would be the natural result of whatever is just in sentiment, and correct in principle.[427]

In the former quotation More argues that the true purpose of education is to 'implant ideas' whereas here she argues that it is to 'implant religion'. According to her, Scriptures teach correct manners to children and that is why she defines not only the role of a religious instructor which is to create 'accountable' Christians but also justifies how correct sentiments and principles are a result of correct manners learnt only from Scriptures. More, no doubt, maintains the importance of developing rationality and cultivating 'intellect' in a child by teaching him Locke's *Human Understanding* or Duncan's *Book of Logic* but also underlines that it is the duty of the educator to 'implant religion' in the girl child in order that she

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[426] Locke writes, 'For who expects, that under a tutor a young gentleman should be an accomplished critic, orator, or logician; go to the bottom of metaphysics, natural philosophy, or mathematics; or be a master in history or chronology? Though something of each of these is to be taught him.' Locke, *On Education,* p. 54.
[427] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 76.

understands the accountability of her actions and accordingly work towards her salvation.[428] More not only accepts the intellectual inferiority of women but also refers to women as subjects to men by naming them as 'accountable beings'.[429] A woman as a student is accountable for studying only Scriptures and adhering only to Scriptural principles, as a wife is accountable for the care of her family and as a mother is accountable for the religious upbringing of her children.[430] Hence, it is the duty of the religious instructor, according to More, to 'implant religion' and create these accountable Christians. She even clarifies this to Dr Beadon, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, in 1801 by writing that her main objective is 'to train up good members of society and plain practical Christians' in her schools.[431] Also, the skill of developing 'sound judgement' is gained, according to More, not from the study of 'natural philosophy, or mathematics', history or metaphysics as Locke suggests but only from the study of Scriptures. Therefore, the only true education for More is a religious education that helps in the attainment of salvation as she writes, 'For education is but an initiation into that life of trial to which we are introduced on our entrance into this world.'[432] These words

[428] More explains in chapter seven that these books are not 'immediately religious' but they help women in exercising their 'reasoning faculties'. However, further in the chapter she argues that all knowledge gained from these books is useless if not accompanied by a religious one as she writes, 'Let her who is disposed to be elated with her literary acquisitions, check her vanity by calling to mind the just remarks of Swift, "that after all her boasted acquirements, a woman will, generally speaking, be found to possess less of what is called learning than a common school-boy."' Ibid, pp. 187-88.

[429] More refers to woman as a creature and as a being when she writes, 'It is not merely a creature who can paint, and play, and dress, and dance; it is a being who can comfort and counsel' her husband. Ibid, p. 107.

[430] According to More, studying different subjects weakens the 'general powers of the mind' and thus, women must only study the Scriptures. Ibid, p. 109; Also, according to her, mothers are responsible for 'arming the minds of the rising generation with the "shield of faith, whereby they shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked;" that of girding them with "that sword of the Spirit which is the word of God".' Ibid, p. 61. Also, in her letter to Walpole in 1789 she writes that 'as there is no market where pleasant manners, and engaging conversation, and Christian virtues are to be bought, methinks it is a pity the ladies do not oftener try to them at home.' Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 1, p. 316.

[431] Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 69.

[432] More, *Strictures*, Vol. 1, p. 173.

suggest a Calvinistic approach to the early education of children where 'trials' can only be successfully completed by following Scriptural principles.[433]

Hannah More further justifies her emphasis on a religious education, in addition to her dislike towards the authors of histories or encyclopaedias mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, by criticizing writers who 'excite emotions, to inspire sentiment and to reduce all mental and moral excellence into sympathy and feeling', playwrights who make vices 'look so like virtues, and are so assimilated to them, that it requires watchfulness and judgement sufficiently to analyse and discriminate' and essayists who do not help in 'stretching' the mind of a woman 'in the wholesome labour of consecutive investigation.'[434] More criticizes novelists who do not produce any moral lessons in their works or exercise the mental faculties of women and instead focus on presenting a romance or a cheap sentimental comedy in order to 'excite emotions' of sympathy or pity.[435] These works, according to More, 'suggest a false standard of morals, to infuse a love of popularity and an anxiety for praise, in the place of that simple and unostentatious rule of doing whatever good we do *because it is the will of God.*'[436] The novelists write only for 'popularity' and their works are devoid of any true morals in order to assist with the acquisition of virtues. Thus, according to More, only studying the Scriptures help us in learning moral lessons and principles that shape our

[433] More was often accused of being a Calvinist but she never accepted it. She only called herself a devout follower of Christianity, of 'practical piety' and of 'holy vigilance'. See her letter to Dr Beadon in 1801 for a detailed description of the accusations laid on her. Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 2, pp. 67-75.
[434] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, pp. 55, 73-4; Vol. 2, p. 59.
[435] When emotions, sentiments, sympathy and feeling come into play we are readily reminded of Adam Smith's *Moral Sentiments* in which he explains the ill-effects of introducing religion to children at a very early age. Smith considers God as a 'mysterious being' who is the result of our own objects of sentiments and passions. According to him, mutual sympathy among citizens lead to the formation of the general rules in a society which help in enforcing the general sense of duty, and the duty of humans is to have happiness and satisfaction when living together in a society. Therefore, the rules are meant for a society's happiness and progress. However, More rejects this idea and says that there are no rules but the rules of the deity that can produce true happiness and a sense of duty towards God. She argues that 'the new philosophers; who while they profess only an ingenious zeal for truth, are in fact slyly endeavouring to destroy Christianity itself, by discountenancing, under the plausible pretence of free inquiry.' For Smith's views on religion see footnote 296 and the explanation that follows.
[436] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 174.

sentiments in the correct manner.[437] Like Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum, More, next, criticizes playwrights who present vices and virtues in a similar manner and in order to 'discriminate' between the two argues that it is necessary to critically interpret ('watchfulness and judgement') these works. However, these compositions, according to More, must be critically interpreted with a view of the Scriptural principles in mind because 'Christianity alone can furnish' the true definition of virtues.[438] Hence, according to More, only Scriptures define true virtues and help us in differentiating them from vices. Lastly, More criticizes essayists who present a brief discussion on subjects of 'current talk' but do not allow 'the mind to any trains of reflection' as a result of their 'brevity, superficially treated' ideas.[439] When women read their essays without any 'cultivated' sense of interpretation they are unable to gain an in-depth knowledge of the subject being discussed because the essayists, bound by word limitations, quickly jump from one idea to another. Therefore, reading essays, according to More, do not help women in developing intellect but her remarks on the same help in understanding her emphasis on critical interpretation as she writes, 'Even common subjects passing through a cultivated understanding, borrow a flavour of its richness'.[440] More tries to explain that irrespective of the essayist dispersing ideas abruptly in his essay, an individual with the skill of critical interpretation ('cultivated understanding') can understand the argument being made and the subject being discussed. Although More does not allude to critical interpretation of Scriptures in her criticism of the essayists it is clear from her previous arguments that it is only Scriptures that help in learning virtues, generating true sentiments and developing that sound judgement to critically interpret the essays. Therefore,

[437] Although More criticizes novelists, she acknowledges that 'there are many honourable exceptions' and Samuel Richardson, according to her, is one of them. She dislikes the novels of Henry Fielding but favours Richardson to a great extent. During a meeting with Dr Johnson in 1780 she accepts his criticism of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* as a 'vicious boo' and of *Joseph Andrews* as an 'abhorrence' but considers Richardson 'to be the greatest genius that had shed its lustre on this path of literature.' Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol.1, p. 101.
[438] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 36.
[439] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 2, p. 59.
[440] Ibid, p. 62.

More lays emphasis on interpretation but only of the Scriptures as she criticizes authors, novelists, playwrights and essayists for not producing works that exercise the mind of a child in order to achieve moral excellence. The following section explores her three-step interpretation model of Scriptures.

More divides the learning process into three steps- segregation, combination and reflection. All steps are co-dependent on each other and the omission of any one disrupts the outcome and renders the knowledge incomplete. More applies this method to a prayer and writes,

> An intelligent mother will seize the first occasion which the child's opening understanding shall allow, for making a little course of lectures on the Lord's prayer, taking every division or short sentence separately; for each furnishes valuable materials for a distinct lecture.[441]

Here she outlines the first step of learning interpretative skills in the form of a break-down method. She explains that the different parts of the prayer must be taught separately to the child because each section holds a moralistic lesson which the child's developing faculties may find difficult to grasp in a single attempt. Proper interpretation of these segregated parts, thus, becomes the responsibility of the religious educator before he moves onto the next step.

> When the child has a pretty good conception of the meaning of each division, she should then be made to observe the connection, relation, and dependence of the several parts of this prayer one upon another; for there is great method and connection in it.[442]

The second step of the learning process constitutes combining the segregated parts of the prayer together and understanding the moral lesson from the whole. However, it is to be noted that More is concerned only with the child being well-versed in Scriptures and not with

[441] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 286.
[442] Ibid, p. 287.

him understanding the 'meaning of each division' of the prayer.[443] In her letter to Wilberforce in 1801 she explains the way she teaches her students in her Charity Schools and writes, 'I also encourage them by little bribes of a penny a chapter, to get by heart certain fundamental parts of Scriptures, for instance, the promises, and prophecies, and confessions of sin.'[444] If the student, according to More, learns every line of the Scriptures rather than understand it he is worthy of a reward but in doing so she contradicts Locke whom she quotes very often in *Strictures.* Locke explains that

> When you draw him to do anything that is fit, by the offer of money; or reward the pains of learning his book, by the pleasure of a luscious morsel; when you promise him a lace-cravat, or a fine new suit, upon performance of some of his little tasks; what do you, by proposing these as rewards, but allow them to be the good things he should aim at, and thereby encourage his longing for them, and accustom him to place his happiness in them?[445]

According to Locke, when children are persuaded to learn with money as a reward they will never learn to 'master' the subject, instead they will aim to find happiness in the reward rather than aiming for the acquisition of knowledge.[446] This method of learning only develops a 'longing' for the reward inside the child and does not help him in developing his mental faculties. However, More, having read Locke, overlooks the fact that the developing interpretative skills of younger children cannot interpret Scriptural lessons and principles as they are accustomed to only memorising those lessons for money.[447] Therefore, gaining a

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[443] This contradicts the objective of the interpretation model as More herself states in the next line that the child must be made to memorise the Scriptures because their 'general powers of the mind' are yet immature to understand them.

[444] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 2, p. 82.

[445] Postulate 52 in Locke, *On Education*, p. 26.

[446] Ibid.

[447] Not only was this outlined by Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1749) but also by Sir W.W. Pepys to More in a letter and by Mary Martha Sherwood (discussed in chapter three of this thesis) in her autobiographical accounts. Sir W.W. Pepys writes to More on March 31, 1812 that 'I remember, when I was young, though very much awake to the fear of God, I had very confused notions of what could be meant by the love of him, and though I could repeat very cordially my thanksgiving for preservation, I could not bring myself to join heartily in thanks for my creation.' William Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 2, pp. 191-92; Sherwood provides an account of her childhood and writes, 'My mind at that time was undoubtedly much engaged by religious subjects, although in total darkness as it regarded Christian doctrines, not one of which I then comprehend.' Sophia Kelly, *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood: (chiefly Autobiographical) with Extracts from Mr Sherwood's Journal*

'pretty good conception' of each part of the prayer in the former lines refers to memorising the lines rather than understanding them. More further urges the educator, anyhow, to make the student 'observe the connection' and learn the moral of the prayer. Also, in these lines, More ironically follows Macaulay's reasoning (explained in detail below) that immature interpretative skills render religious readings as useless for a child.

Irrespective of the second step remaining incomplete for many students, More introduces step three which requires the educator to explain to the students the essence of the prayer, which lies in knowing man's dependence on God.

> If they are first taught that important truth, that as needy creatures they want help, which may be done by some easy analogy, they will easily be led to understand how naturally *petition* forms a most considerable branch of prayer: and divine grace being among the things for which they are to petition, this naturally suggests to the mind the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit. And when to this is added […] that as offending creatures they want pardon, the necessity of *confession* will easily be made intelligible to them.[448]

Firstly, it is to be noted that in calling children 'needy' and 'offending creatures' who 'want help' and 'pardon' More showcases Calvinistic beliefs, according to which, all humans are born sinful. Furthermore, she wants her educators to make the students enlightened and accustomed to this 'important truth'. Secondly, if the student fails to understand how different moralistic lessons of the different sections of the prayer are inter-connected he will not 'easily' understand or 'naturally suggest', as More states here, the essence of the prayer that lies in *'petition'* and '*confession'.* This last step of the learning process requires a critical interpretation of the words petition and confession from the student which she is unable to

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during His Imprisonment in France & Residence in India, (London: Darton and Co., 1857), p. 209. Childhood, according to both Sir Pepys and Sherwood, is an age of providing nourishment to our developing faculties from the perusal of different subjects rather than focusing on learning and interpreting prayers.

[448] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 292.

comprehend as a result of her failure in properly completing step two of this model.[449] However, this final step helps the students in acquiring a strong hold over the meaning of the prayer by understanding the purpose or the essence behind it, and according to More, it lies in the students knowing their sinful nature and in asking pardon for it.

Therefore, it becomes clear from More's model that she agrees and lays emphasis on critical interpretation in the acquisition of knowledge and the model, also, exemplifies her words quoted in the first epigraph to this chapter which reads, 'Under the mask of religion, I fear I indulge my own humours and resentments'.[450] Irrespective of being aware (having read Locke and citing him often in *Strictures*) that proper interpretative skills, gained with practice and time, are required to understand the meaning of Scriptures More continues with step two and step three in her model and thus exemplifies how she indulges her 'own humours' 'under the mask of religion'.

In my above analysis of the selected works of Macaulay and More I have shown how the two important literary figures worked for a change in the educational system of the eighteenth century, with the former focusing on providing students a diverse curriculum and the latter focusing on their salvation through the Bible. However, the theme of interpretation and teaching students to develop their interpretative skills is common to works of both writers. This allows me to identify a common aspect in the education of children that prevailed in all eighteenth-century educational institutions, be it the Grammar Schools at the beginning of the century that taught classical literature (discussed in chapter one of this

[449] More explains that children must pray and seek guidance from the Divine and to receive proper guidance is their only petition which they must aim for. Furthermore, when children self-examine, understand and ask pardon for the fact that they are 'offending creatures', the feeling to confess their faults will naturally come to their 'ingenious mind'. In addition to these two, understanding adoration, self-dedication, thanksgiving and intercession constitute the essence of the prayer. Hence, in order to understand the proper meaning and essence of Scriptural lessons or of any other topic, it is necessary, argues Locke and Macaulay, to first develop proper interpretative skills through the perusal of different intellectual subjects. Ibid, pp. 292-94.
[450] Roberts, *Memoirs,* Vol. 2, p. 32.

thesis), Girls' academies that focused on teaching to read and write or Sunday Schools that taught the Bible. Therefore, as a conclusion to this chapter I present certain similarities between Fielding's *The Governess* (1749), Macaulay's *Letters* (1790) and More's *Strictures* (1799) which helps in understanding how teaching children to develop their interpretative skills remained a common objective of educationalists throughout the eighteenth century. The similarities focus on the definition of an ideal educator, on how he or she must teach and on the importance of a good company.

THE IDEAL EDUCATOR OF FIELDING, MACAULAY, MORE AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Sarah Fielding, through Mrs Teachum and her unique method of teaching from a distance, explains the role and importance of an ideal educator in the development of a child. Along-with this feature, Fielding distinguishes Mrs Teachum with certain other qualities such as a non-violent punishing style that generates a sense of self-realization in her students, a focus on teaching interpretative skills to the students through fairy tales and a play, a limited indulgence with religious activities or the religious education of students, and an emphasis on outdoor recreational activities similar to that of indoor scholastic activities of reading and writing. Macaulay, too, describes her ideal educator in a similar light as she writes,

> His learning must be accompanied with modesty, his wisdom with gaiety, his sagacity must have a keenness which can penetrate through the veil of prejudice, and attain to the high superiority of original thinking; and the virtues of his mind must be accompanied with that tenderness of feeling which produces the most valuable of all excellences, an unconfined benevolence.[451]

The characteristics of an ideal educator outlined by Macaulay in these lines remind us of Mrs Teachum from *The Governess* (1749) and on a closer inspection these lines allude to the

[451] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 105.

larger plan of Mrs Teachum which is explained in chapter one of this thesis. Macaulay explains that an educator must be modest, wise and cheerful in order to become an ideal educator. Mrs Teachum's modesty, the first trait mentioned by Macaulay, is highlighted when she brings apples for everyone in the academy or allows Miss Jenny to read fairy tales or permits the girls to have an evening walk. Wisdom, the second requirement in Macaulay's definition, is reflected in Mrs Teachum when she warns Miss Jenny of the dangers of reading fairy tales and teaches the girls to critically interpret characters not only in fairy tales but also in plays for the acquisition of virtues. Gaiety or cheerfulness, the third quality of an ideal educator outlined by Macaulay, is visible in Mrs Teachum when she routinely takes the girls for long walks in nearby farms where the girls happily gather flowers for their governess in return. Furthermore, Mrs Teachum, like in the above quoted lines, remains unbiased in her teachings and 'penetrate through the veil of prejudice' by not developing a sympathetic attitude towards the girls after receiving and reading their biographies from Miss Jenny. All the three virtuous traits mentioned by Macaulay when combined together generates benevolence in an educator which, again, is visible in Mrs Teachum when she allows the girls not only a 'walk as far as the *Dairy-House,* to eat some curds and cream' but also when she dispenses 'with their school-attendance for that afternoon.'[452] Therefore, Macaulay's ideal educator closely resembles Sarah Fielding's.

Hannah More, too, characterises her ideal educator with similar features in *Strictures.* On punishments and discipline she writes,

> Ungoverned anger in the teacher, and inability to discriminate between venial errors and premeditated offence, though they may lead a timid creature to hide wrong tempers, or to conceal bad actions, will not help her to subdue the one or correct the other. Severity will drive terrified children to seek, not for reformation, but for impunity. A readiness to forgive them

[452] Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 66.

> promotes frankness. And we should, above all things, encourage them to be frank, in order to come at their faults.[453]

More states that a teacher must be able to differentiate between unconsciously committed acts of offence and the ones committed consciously by children. If the act, says More, is of an unconscious nature the child must be forgiven with a warning but if the act is consciously committed then the child must be made to understand the consequences of such an act through a punishment. For example, when the girls fight over apples in *The Governess* Mrs Teachum, finding 'all equally guilty', takes the apples away and requires 'proofs' of kindness from them in future 'before they had any more instances of like kindness from her.'[454] The girls, thus, understand their mistake, apologise to Mrs Teachum and go on to become best friends. However, the understanding is achieved in the arbour where Miss Jenny reads fairy tales to the girls and Mrs Teachum critically interprets them into moral lessons that forces the girls into self-realization of their mistakes. Hannah More refers to this understanding as 'frankness' in the above lines. Also, it is to be noted that since Fielding was against corporal punishment so is Hannah More because, according to her, 'terrified children' will never seek 'reformation'. In the same way as Mrs Teachum, More requires her educator to encourage her students 'to come at their faults' through self-realization of their own mistakes. More lays an even greater emphasis on self-realization in the final step of her interpretation model when she asks the student to understand the essence of the prayer through petition and confession. She says,

> They should be brought to understand that it must not be such a general and vague confession as awakens no sense of personal humiliation, as excites no recollection of their own more peculiar and individual faults. But it must be a confession founded on self-knowledge, which is itself to arise out of the practice of self-examination.[455]

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[453] More, *Strictures,* Vol.1, p. 149.
[454] Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 6.
[455] More, *Strictures,* Vol.1, p. 292.

Self-realization, which is the central idea behind Mrs Teachum's larger plan in *The Governess* is also the central objective of More's interpretation model in *Strictures.* In order to learn the essence of the prayer, which is the final step in the model, confession along-with other attributes plays an important role. According to More, true confession produces the 'sense of personal humiliation' in an individual as a result of him becoming aware of his faults; and an individual, continues More, acknowledges his faults only after self-examination. Therefore, confession is achieved through a process of self-examination which increases self-knowledge and which further invokes personal humiliation. This helps us in understanding that self-realization or confession is also the central idea, like that of Mrs Teachum, behind Hannah More's interpretation model in *Strictures.*

Mrs Teachum teaches the girls at her academy the definition of virtues which lies in, and are not limited to, compassion, friendship, honesty and love. In order that the girls understand the meanings of these qualities Mrs Teachum does not deliver lectures on them, instead she agrees to the reading of fairy tales and a play (sources she considers inappropriate for gaining knowledge) by Miss Jenny and interprets the meanings of those qualities in the form of moral lessons to the girls.[456] Hannah More, too, agrees to this form of teaching and writes that 'serious instruction will not only be uninteresting but irksome if conveyed to youth in a cold didactic way.'[457] She further writes,

> Even when the nature of your subject makes it necessary for you to be more plain and didactic, do not fail frequently to enliven these less engaging parts of your discourse with some incidental imagery which shall captivate the fancy. Relieve what would otherwise be too dry and preceptive, with some striking exemplification in point, some touching instance to be imitated, some awful warning to be avoided; something which shall illustrate your instruction, which shall realize your position,

[456] The story of *The Cruel Giant Barbarico* teaches them a lesson on compassion, of *The Princess Hebe* on friendship, of *The Funeral* (a play) on honesty and of *The Fable of Birds* on love.
[457] More, *Strictures,* Vol.1, p. 261.

> which shall embody your idea, and give shape and form, colour and life, to your precept.[458]

More asks the educator, in these lines, to engage the student in activities suitable for his age or books of his own interest for a better understanding of the required lessons. It is the responsibility of the educator to interpret moral lessons through 'imagery' or 'fancy' that attracts the student. The way Mrs Teachum uses fairy tales, More asks her educator not only to 'illustrate' his or her plain instructions through fictional stories but also to properly interpret those illustrations because fancy elevates their imagination and 'particular care', argues More, is to be taken to 'press that ardent and ever-active power'.[459] The actions or the characteristics of various characters in those stories personify vices and virtues (plain and didactic moral lessons) and children understand lessons better when these qualities are given a 'shape and form' but only through a proper interpretation. Therefore, it is necessary for an educator to teach children to critically interpret characters in a story in order that they understand and differentiate virtues from vices. This method, says More, not only helps the student in learning moral lessons but it also helps them in developing interpretative skills as they understand the personification of vices and virtues in those stories. However, More also lays emphasis on self-knowledge arguing that 'it will be to little purpose that our pupils become accurate critics on the characters of others, while they remain ignorant of themselves.'[460] More's emphasis on self-knowledge alludes to the larger plan of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* that helps the girls realize their mistakes after listening to and carefully interpreting the fairy tales, the play and each other's biographies. Catharine Macaulay, too, presents a similar argument.

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[458] Ibid, p. 254.
[459] Ibid, p. 261.
[460] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 207.

Like Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum, Macaulay states that fairy tales and Aesop's fables are meant for adults and not for children to read. She writes, 'Aesop's fables, which, though they were certainly written for the advantage of grown children, have in modern days been universally consigned to the use of the nurseries.'[461] Arguing that the developing interpretative skills in a child require more time and practice in order to comprehend the moralistic lessons in these tales she further writes that the hidden moral lessons in fairy tales are beyond a child's comprehension.[462] Macaulay explains that fairy tales excite the imagination and sentiments of a child as a result of supernatural elements that their authors include in the stories, and which in turn distract the child, because of his lack of 'knowledge and understanding', from concentrating on interpreting moralistic lessons. She, also, argues that teaching children to differentiate between characters in a book on the basis of their virtuous and vicious actions, like Mrs Teachum interprets loyalty from the character of Trusty and deceit from the character of Lady Brumpton in *The Funeral,* helps in the development of their interpretative skills which they can later utilize in wisely distinguishing people around them.[463] She writes,

> It has been advanced by several writers […] that it is dangerous to describe to pupils the human character […] But I do not think that deceit can ever be practiced with success in education; and that this above all others will be found a mischievous mistake, because it excludes the great lesson of moral prudence from tuition, and leaves the enlightening of the pupil's mind on this important subject to the dangerous means of experience.[464]

Macaulay, in these lines, outlines two important things. One, it is equally important for the students to learn about the vicious characters inside stories as they learn about the virtuous ones. The teacher, argues Macaulay, cannot achieve 'success in education' if he or she

[461] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 54.
[462] See footnote 350.
[463] With reference to footnote 207, see Mrs Teachum's interpretation of the quotation mentioned in chapter one of this thesis.
[464] Macaulay, *Letters*, p. 185.

deceives the students by teaching them to turn a blind eye towards the bad characters and asking them to focus only on the good. Two, it will be a 'mischievous mistake' of the teacher if he or she leaves the naïve students to discern this for themselves as 'correctness of thought and composition', points Macaulay, 'will be acquired by time and labour' in interpretation.[465] Therefore, not only must the students be taught about both sides of the 'human character' but also it falls upon the teacher to necessarily do so. According to Macaulay, the students can only differentiate the good from the bad if they are equally aware of the two and thus it is necessary for the teacher to assist the students in developing 'moral prudence' by teaching them to critically interpret every character in the books they read. However, like More, she explains that as critically interpreting characters in books help us in the acquisition of virtues those observations should be 'mixed with such a proper respect for your own opinions as to make you guard against any imitation of the follies of the public sentiment.'[466] With an emphasis on self-knowledge along-with the development of proper interpretative skills Macaulay, thus, presents a similar argument as Fielding's and More's on the importance of critically interpreting books, how it helps children in the acquisition of virtues and how important it is for an educator to develop those interpretative skills.

Miss Jenny plays an important role in bringing about the transformation of the girls in *The Governess.* She not only reads moralistic fairy tales to them after the approval of Mrs Teachum but also develops a positive companionship among girls by initiating the exchange of autobiographies. Furthermore, after each girl finishes relating her story Jenny highlights her faults and praises her for understanding and overcoming them. Thus, Jenny sets an example of an obedient student and an honest friend. Similarly, Hannah More highlights the importance of such a friend in *Strictures* when she writes,

[465] Ibid, p. 129.
[466] Ibid, p. 187.

> We should not select, for the sake of present ease, a soothing flatterer, who will lull us into a pleasing oblivion of our failings, but a friend who, valuing our soul's health above our immediate comfort, will rouse us from torpid indulgence to animation, vigilance, and virtue.[467]

More agrees with Fielding's view that a true friend is one who informs us of our faults and does not ignores them for the fear of offending us. 'A soothing flatterer' who overlooks our faults will only bring a temporary comfort whereas a true friend is one who overlooks 'our immediate comfort' corrects our faults, makes us vigilant towards vices and inculcates permanent virtues within us. Therefore, a good friend, according to both Fielding and More, by communicating our faults to us helps us in the development of our interpretative skills as we learn to differentiate between vices and virtues through a critical understanding of our own actions.

CONCLUSION

Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749), Catharine Macaulay's *Letters* (1790) and Hannah More's *Strictures* (1799) thus reflect certain similarities, as mentioned above, regarding the education of children. More not only presents similar views as Fielding's on punishments, on teaching through illustrations or on the definition of a true friend but also on the importance of self-examination or self-realization which constitutes the larger plan of Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1749). All three writers lay emphasis in these similarities on the development of interpretative skills in children for the acquisition of knowledge. The difference, however, arises when these writers employ interpretative skills for different purposes. Fielding aims at an overall intellectual development of children as she teaches them to interpret different sources of knowledge that include fairy tales, plays and outdoor recreational activities for the acquisition of virtues. Macaulay, too, aims at an overall intellectual development of children

[467] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 2, p. 110.

as she urges her educator to exercise both their mental and corporal faculties through the perusal of books (like the ones in her prescribed curriculum) and outdoor activities respectively. Unlike Fielding who keeps religious activities to a minimum in her academy or Macaulay who argues that the minds of children are 'very little fit for the contemplation of religious subjects' Hannah More aims for the salvation of her students as she teaches them to interpret, through her interpretation model, only Scriptures for the acquisition of virtues.[468] She justifies her emphasis on Scriptures by writing that a child of 'moderate capacity' cannot achieve intellectual excellence but 'may be led on to perfection' on his road towards salvation through the Bible. Ironically, More agrees that a child of extraordinary capacity can achieve intellectual excellence if his or her educator teaches him various intellectual books which will further help in the development of his interpretative skills. Catharine Macaulay does exactly so and prescribes a curriculum, explained in the introduction to this chapter, for any student who shows 'any marks of more than ordinary vigour of intellect'.[469] However, being 'a preacher of salvation on Scriptural grounds' More urges her educator in *Strictures* to teach Scriptures to all students irrespective of their age and their intellectual excellence.[470]

Hannah More is of the opinion that a child is capable of understanding and developing his own interests under proper guidance when she writes, 'Only furnish them with a few simple and harmless materials, and a little, but not too much, leisure, and they will manufacture their own pleasures with more skill, and success, and satisfactions.'[471] Although More acknowledges a child's capabilities to nurture his own interests in recreational activities it cannot be overlooked that those recreational activities are categorized by John Locke, whom More quotes very often in *Strictures*, as the major influencing sources of developing

[468] Macaulay, *Letters,* p. 89.
[469] Ibid, p. 128.
[470] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 2, p. 219.
[471] More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 97.

intellectual excellence. Furthermore, More agrees that it is impossible to implant ideas or principles in a child through subjects other than the Bible because they weaken his faculties and the 'general powers of the mind'.[472] She writes, 'Let not then the soul be starved by feeding it on such unsubstantial aliment, for it can no more be nourished by these empty husks than the body can be fed with ideas and principles.'[473] If studying different subjects, as More argues, in the childhood decrease the powers of the mind it is also to be noted that studying the Bible, as she further writes in the *Strictures*, enlightens the child with the world's 'emptiness, its vanity, its futility, and its wickedness' in his childhood. This develops a dystopian view of the world in the child's mind and this knowledge, argues John Locke, Sarah Fielding, Adam Smith and Catharine Macaulay in this thesis, is incapable of developing the reasoning faculties because the child is deprived of interpreting different sources of knowledge other than the Bible under the care of a religious instructor. Therefore, like Sarah Fielding, Hannah More lays emphasis on enhancing student's interpretative skills, but for her it is only possible through the Bible.

[472] Ibid, p. 109.
[473] Ibid, p.111.

CHAPTER THREE: A NEW MRS TEACHUM- MARY MARTHA SHERWOOD'S *THE GOVERNESS* (1820)

> She thence went on to remark, that whatever excellence may appear in any human character, it can be but as a faint shadow of *that*, of which the dear Saviour's character was the substance; exhorting them therefore daily to take their Lord's conduct, when on earth, as the only perfect ensample of a holy life.[474]

This chapter focuses on the evangelical re-writing of Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) by Mary Martha Sherwood in 1820 and represents the change in the educational discourse between the two. It closely analyses Sherwood's childhood remarks regarding fairy tales and religion in contrast with Mrs Teachum's opinions on these things in her version of *The Governess* (1820) in order to think through the contrast between Sherwood's own education and the educational theory she proposes in the novel. Megan A. Norcia points out that writers of the early nineteenth century, including Sherwood, wrote instructional texts but 'something radical was also going on in their writing', hence, keeping this in mind, I explore the religious radicalism of Sherwood who under the influence of Evangelicalism picked up a seventy-one year old text for a religious revision.[475] Re-writing Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) is a result of the evangelical influence from Rev Parson in India which is discussed in detail in the chapter and which enfolds another facet of Sherwood's life necessary for understanding the central argument of critical interpretation in this thesis.

Whereas Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) represented an educational practice that focused on the intellectual development of girls through critical interpretations of fairy tales and plays provided to them by Mrs Teachum, Sherwood's edition of *The Governess*

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[474] Mary Martha Sherwood, *The Governess,* 5th ed. (London: 1892), p. 251.

[475] Megan A. Norcia, 'The London Shopscape: Educating the Child Consumer in the Stories of Mary Wollstonecraft, Maria Edgeworth, and Mary Martha Sherwood', *Children's Literature*, Vol. 41 (2013), pp. 28-56.

(1820) removes not only the fairy tales but also condemns Mrs Teachum's moralistic interpretations of those fairy tales. The new Mrs Teachum (1820) instead lays emphasis on scriptural and religious instructions. The 1820 Mrs Teachum draws Biblical metaphors even from the simplest of things such as the flowers in the wilderness. In chapter nine, while walking towards the house of Mrs Faulconbridge along-with the girls, looking at the flowers she comments, 'As God Almighty supplies even the wants of each little flower of the forest, he will assuredly much more supply both the bodily and spiritual wants of those who love and trust Him.'[476] This reminds us of the Gospel of Matthew from the Bible which reads, 'And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.'[477] (Matt. 6.28) In order to teach the girls that nothing in this world thrives without the blessings of God Mrs Teachum explains how every flower in the forest blossoms only with God's grace. Whereas Fielding's Mrs Teachum (1749) focuses on teaching the principles of honesty, friendship and co-operation in order to live a happy life, Sherwood's Mrs Teachum (1820) focuses on teaching the Scriptures in order to live a religious life.

Examples like this from what Mika Suzuki describes as a 'bowdlerized version' of the original *The Governess* (1749) help us in understanding the persistence of an Evangelical trend in the educational institutions of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth-century England.[478] Evangelicals believed that the road to salvation lay in the words of the gospel and Jesus Christ, and in the profession of a strong faith. Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820), with its biblical messages and catechism, is a fine example that provides a clear picture of

[476] Sherwood, *The Governess*, pp. 231-32.
[477] *The Holy Bible.* King James Version, (US: Random House Publishing Group, September 1991), p. 854.
[478] Mika Suzuki terms it a 'bowdlerized version' and observes that Sherwood 'did to Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*, a fairly popular work, what Hannah More did to popular chapbooks; by intentionally imitating popular forms, they attempted to suppress them, replacing them with their own creation.' Suzuki, 'The 'true use of reading': Sarah Fielding and mid eighteenth-century literary strategies' (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of London, 1998), p. 241.

Evangelical principles to its reader. The book explicitly presents the evangelical message that learning the Bible and following the teachings of Jesus Christ are the only way for schools to nurture good, moral and disciplined children. Hence, Evangelicalism lays emphasis on biblical authority and on spreading the message of the gospel. Therefore, in order to better understand the changes in the educational discourses between the two *Governesses* this chapter presents a brief discussion on the principles of Evangelicalism and its significance for early nineteenth-century women educationalists, especially Mary Martha Sherwood, with an opportunity to enter the literary world and the world of work. It then goes on to analyse Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) in detail, demonstrating how her work puts Evangelical principles into practice.

Sherwood's other works such as *The History of Little Henry and his Bearer* (1814), *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818), *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818), *The Infant's Progress* (1821) or *The History of Little Lucy and her Dhaye* (1823) attract more critical attention than *The Governess* (1820). Critics such as Ashok Malhotra, Nandini Bhattacharya and Samir Soni focus on different aspects of Colonialism in the works of Sherwood, whereas I explore the Evangelicalism of Sherwood in the context of her only pedagogical text, *The Governess*. Indeed, the Colonial aspect of Sherwood's life is very important and it contributed greatly to her literary career because during her eleven years of stay in India from 1805-1816 she not only suffered the death of her children which prompted her to write *The Little Henry* but it was also the period during which she became an Evangelist. This latter part, on Sherwood's Evangelicalism, is the prime focus of this chapter which is understood in the context of her time spent in India. Bhattacharya attacks Sherwood's aims of 'mothering the colony' in order to uplift the 'colonized, fetishized object's' morality through Biblical lessons and accuses her of merely advocating colonialism under the disguise of this moral upliftment. She explains that the cruel face of Colonialism is 'sublated in Sherwood's narratives in aestheticized child

morality, but these idealizations mask and do not eradicate the stereotyping violence of hegemonies.'[479] Bhattacharya focuses on the adverse effects of England's missionary (Evangelical) project in India, whereas I try to present its effects on nineteenth-century British educational institutions through my analysis of *The Governess* (1820). Samir Soni advances Bhattacharya's critique on Colonialism through his analysis of *The History of Little Lucy and her Dhaye* and writes that Sherwood separates Anglicanism from the Empire and that her 'novels exhibit more ambivalence than advocacy for the imperial project, but support it as a means to an end.'[480] However, a critical reading of Sherwood's autobiography helps in understanding her Evangelist thoughts getting mixed with Colonialism when she describes the Indians as a 'heathen population who were living wholly without a knowledge of our God and our Redeemer', and as a result of which she started her own school in the army barracks to teach the Bible to the children of the wealthy Indians.[481] Irrespective of receiving less attention, Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) helps in understanding not only the broad concept of Evangelicalism in England in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century but also the gradual change in girls' education system in the country.

Mika Suzuki's doubts about the authority of Mrs Teachum in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) mentioned in chapter one of this thesis are reversed when she examines Sherwood's Mrs Teachum (1820). The reversal, however, is not a result of the author bringing Mrs Teachum to the forefront and giving her more dialogues but because of the religious instructions of the new Mrs Teachum who is now an Evangelist. Suzuki observes

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[479] Nandini Bhattacharya, 'Maternal plots, Colonialist Fictions: Colonial Pedagogy in Mary Martha Sherwood's Children's Stories', *Nineteenth Century Contexts* (2001), pp. 404-05.
[480] Samir Soni, 'The Anglo-Indian Novel, 1774-1825: Ameliorative Imperialisms' (published Doctoral Thesis, University of California, 2016), p. 177.
[481] Kelly, *Life of Mrs Sherwood,* p. 288; M. Nancy Cutt, Sherwood's biographer, writes that after the death of her children in India she turned 'to the rescue of regimental orphans, white and half-caste'. Her classes began 'with the Catechism, which eighteenth-century Evangelicals had revived, enlivening it by supplementary questions.' *Mrs Sherwood and Her Books for Children,* (OUP: London, 1974), p. 14.

that with an increased 'emphasis on religion, the role of the instructor who teaches religion is expanded and strengthened.'[482] In the remainder of this chapter I expand on Suzuki's brief analysis of Sherwood's Mrs Teachum's religious teaching in the academy and examine the outcome of such a learning in comparison with Sherwood's own beliefs regarding children's education from her autobiography.

EVANGELICALISM, WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In the eighteenth century Evangelicalism took its modern form from the ideals of the Methodist John Wesley (1703-91) who believed that true Christianity was contained in the Bible and that it was the sole authority on our road to salvation.[483] For Evangelicals the Bible took precedence over any other authority and it was necessary to adhere to the Scriptures to live a happy and a fulfilling life, devoid of any sin. W.R. Ward defines Evangelicalism simply as 'preaching nothing but Christ and him crucified as long as the hearers found in this an immediacy they did not find in broader structures of the faith.'[484] For Ward Evangelicalism is rooted within the teachings of Christ and, according to him, preaching His sacrifices is enough to develop morality and faith in people. Mark Hutchinson further writes that the Evangelicals 'initially focussed on personal salvation rather than social and political transformation' but sought reforms in education and educational institutions later in the

[482] Suzuki, 'The True Use of Reading' (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of London, 1998), p. 245.
[483] Donald D. Bloesch writes that Evangelicalism is concerned with understanding the difference between 'works-righteousness on the one hand and cheap grace on the other.' Evangelicalism, according to him, is a modern term used for describing the age old ideological battle inside the Church. In the 5th century Pelagius and Augustine initiated this debate. The former believed that actions and not faith yield salvation and that 'grace could be merited by a life of rigorous obedience to the law of God' whereas the latter believed that humans were bound to commit sin and the 'liberation of the Holy Spirit' inside the heart was only possible through the Bible. In the seventeenth century the Protestants and the Catholics entered this debate. On the one hand, Martin Luther and John Calvin lay emphasis on the innate corruption of the human heart, on being born with the original sin and on salvation through the Bible whereas, on the other hand, the Catholics believed that 'the human role is to cooperate with grace' and that each individual must live on the lines of divine mercy. Donald D. Bloesch, 'Evangelicalism', *Dialog: A Journal of Theology*, 47 (2008), p. 17.
[484] W.R. Ward, *Early Evangelicalism: A Global Intellectual History, 1670–1789,* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2006), p. 185.

eighteenth century.[485] One manifestation of this attempt was the establishment of Sunday Schools in the 1750s. The curriculum of the new educational institutions set up on lines of the SPCK served a dual purpose. They not only helped in spreading the word of God to the poor and the illiterate section of the society but also provided an opportunity of employment to women.

Chapter one of this thesis describes the Charity School Movement, the motto of SPCK and the establishment of various Charity Schools in England.[486] W.M. Jacob points out that the government and the SPCK 'were anxious about the contagion of popery and about Quakerism, and so sought to inculcate in the children of the poor the teachings of the Church of England, their duties to God and their neighbours, and habits of industry.'[487] The SPCK, the Charity Schools and the Sunday Schools taught the Bible to the poor and the illiterate in order not only to reduce the crime rate in the country but also to protect the children of the affluent middle-class and the upper-class from getting involved with those from the lower-classes.[488] Women as educators/teachers/governesses, then, were well placed to achieve this aim. David W. Bebbington writes that more women converted to Evangelicalism than men. 'Both Cambuslang converts in 1742 and Bristol Methodists in 1783 included two women for

[485] Mark Hutchinson and John Wolffe, *A Short History of Global Evangelicalism,* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 28.
[486] For further reading on the schools established by the SPCK see David A. Reid's 'Education as a philanthropic enterprise: the dissenting academies of eighteenth-century England', *History of Education,* 39 (2010), pp. 299-317.
[487] The growing population of the cities was a major concern which even caught the eye of educationalists such as John Locke who addressed it in his report to the Board of Trade in 1698. Locke was amazed by large families of the poor and them sitting idle in their houses and, thus, recommended the establishment of Workhouses where the poor could work for a living. As for the education of the poor children the parish schools were already neglecting and rejecting admissions to them which gave rise to the SPCK in 1699. W.M. Jacob, '"The Glory of the Age We Live in": Christian Education and Philanthropy in Eighteenth-Century London Charity Schools', *Studies in Church History*, 55 (2019), p. 243.
[488] The crime rate in the country remained the same even after the efforts of the SPCK. The boys graduating from these schools resorted to theft, robbery and other demeaning crimes. For more information on the education of boys refer W.M. Jacob's 'The Glory of the Age We Live in', pp. 243-54.

every man.'[489] The majority of those belonging to the upper-class such as Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood supported the SPCK curriculums and insisted on specifically teaching the Bible to the students. As the following discussion will show, these upper and middle-class women seized the opportunity to raise their standing in the society by developing on religion and virtues, subjects which were closely associated and specifically attributed to women by men in the eighteenth century.[490] In this process, these women aimed not only to preserve the patriarchal order but also to transform it by means of their moral authority which created further divisions amongst women educationalists themselves. The upper-classes in the eighteenth century believed that morality, values and virtues varied according to class, a thought which affected their works and undoubtedly entered the realm of women's education and growth. Writers such as Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood focus on the role of women in reforming the society and in 'regenerating the morals of their social inferiors'.[491] Anne Scott explains how religion offered these women a platform for self-expression and self-fulfilment. Bebbington adds to this and writes, 'Religion may have provided psychological reassurance, even emotional outlet, for this section of the population.'[492] This makes any progress in women's education in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries a secondary subject in the eyes of Sunday School women educationalists, a name given to them by Warren W. Wooden and discussed in detail below. Real education, according to Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood, meant 'implanting religion' into the minds of children and teaching them the fact that 'there is nothing in this

[489] David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to The 1980s*, (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 1989), pp. 56-7.
[490] Female virtue in the eighteenth century was commonly associated with being religious or as Arlene Wilner writes, with 'feeling rather than in thinking or in doing'. 'Education and Ideology in Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 24 (1995), pp. 307-27.
[491] W.M. Jacob, 'The Glory of the Age We Live in', p. 313.
[492] David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, pp. 56-7.

world which can make us happy, but religion.'[493] Religion or Evangelicalism, thus, provided them with the opportunity to maintain the status quo and furthermore earn a name for themselves in a society led by men.

Evangelicals preached differently to different people. According to Susie Steinbach, divisional preaching for gaining popularity amidst the masses was a practice that was common among the Evangelicals of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Steinbach writes, 'Evangelicalism's message about gender and family varied by class: middle class women were encouraged to cultivate their godliness in domestic ways, while working-class women were more likely to see the wider world as an appropriate audience for their religious enthusiasm.'[494] On the one hand, poor children were taught the Bible in order to be humble towards the rich and poor women were asked to be good mothers so that their children never forget the Scriptures. On the other hand, women of the upper-classes were taught that it was their responsibility to save the souls of the poor through charity which was considered to be the true trait of the true Christian. Evangelicalism infused into the minds of the upper-classes in the eighteenth century that morality, values and virtues differed according to social status, a thought which gradually penetrated into educational ideas concerning the upbringing of girls.[495] As a result women were trapped in the private sphere, according to Margaret George, by the lack of education and specialized training, and by 'the self-fulfilling prophecy of their "natural" place and inferiority.'[496] Marlene Legates, too, associates this difference in

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[493] See page 151, footnote 435 in chapter two of this thesis for a detail understanding of More's commentary on religious education. Mary Martha Sherwood's views on religion as mentioned above appear in her version of *The Governess* (1820), p. 178.

[494] Susie Steinbach, *Women in England 1760-1914: A Social History,* (London: Phoenix Paperback, 2005), p. 142.

[495] The subject of preaching separate Evangelical principles to different sections of society is further explored by Steinbach when she writes that 'The Mother's Union (founded 1876) had members of all classes but they met separately, in "Drawing Room" meetings for the middle and upper classes and "Ordinary Mothers Meetings" for the Victorian classes.' Ibid, p. 144.

[496] Margaret George, 'From "good wife" to "mistress": The Transformation of the Female in Bourgeois Culture', *Science and Society,* 37 (1973), pp. 152-77.

education with class divisions of the society.[497] Yet, as both George and Legate admit, the situation was more complex than this. One way of understanding the growth of Evangelicalism in England is to explore the two groups of women educationalists that emerged as a result of their differing views on providing religious education to children, especially girls. Percy Muir named these emerging groups of women as the 'monstrous regiment of women who made children's stories a female specialty from 1780.'[498] However, it is only their respective works with their respective ideologies that lead critics such as Warren Wooden to separate the women educationalists into two groups; the eighteenth-century English society made no such distinction.

According to Warren W. Wooden, two groups of women educationalists developed namely the Rational Moralists and the Sunday School Moralists. The first group included Sarah Fielding, Catherine Macaulay 'and others under the influence of Locke and Rousseau', whereas the second group 'numbered not only Anna Barbauld but also Sarah Trimmer, Hannah More, Mrs Sherwood, and others.'[499] The Rational women educationalists had developed a firm ground in the literary world of men and sought equality in education as we have seen in the works of Sarah Fielding (*The Governess*, 1749; *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates*, 1762) in chapter one and of Catharine Macaulay (*The History of England*, 1763-83; *Letters on Education*, 1790) in chapter two of this thesis. They opposed the idea of teaching the Bible to the students because, according to them, it halted their intellectual development.[500] Sarah Fielding's ideals on education as presented in *The Governess* (1749) does not differentiate between inner and outer developments or learning morals and good

[497] Marlene Legates, 'The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 10 (1976), pp. 21-39.
[498] Mitzi Myers, 'Impeccable Governesses, Rational Dames, and Moral Mothers: Mary Wollstonecraft and the Female Tradition in Georgian Children's Books', *Children's Literature*, 14 (1986), pp. 31-59.
[499] Warren W. Wooden, 'Classics of Children's Literature, and: From Instruction to Delight: An Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850 (review)', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 7 (1982), pp. 62-3.
[500] See the section on Sarah Fielding in chapter one and on Catharine Macaulay in chapter two of this thesis.

behavioural conduct. According to her, a short prayer according to the age and intellect of a child is enough to make him understand the role played by God in his life, and which Mrs Teachum (1749) accomplishes on a routine basis every morning in her academy. Catharine Macaulay, another radical moralist named by Warren Wooden, argues in *Letters on Education* (1790) that it is not necessary for a child to dwell on the Christian philosophy and more importantly it is not necessary for a teacher to teach the Bible to a child. Merely remembering and thanking God through a short prayer is sufficient for a child's knowledge. According to both Fielding and Macaulay, proper instructions from an ideal educator provide the only opportunity of inculcating virtues inside children.[501] Brita Rang, too, explores the characteristics of an ideal educator and observes that 'education aimed at virtue-guided conduct' is an essential requirement of his character.[502] Therefore, for radical moralists the objective of education is the development of virtues inside children but an ideal educator takes precedence over this objective because without an ideal instructor instructions lose their effect.

Radicals Moralists such as Macaulay or Wollstonecraft agreed with the Sunday School moralists 'that a serious education was essential to achieve recognition of women's worth. But their calls for co-education and female independence aroused conservative suspicions of immorality.'[503] Hannah More begins her *Strictures* with a critique on Wollstonecraft and Mary Martha Sherwood rewrote Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) as an evangelical tract. As mentioned in chapter two of this thesis, on the one hand we have

[501] The importance of teaching virtues to children is also mentioned by Eustace Budgell in *The Spectator* in 1712 in which he explains the repercussions of a bad education and says that 'Virtue is the most important aspect of a child's education because it enables him to live happily both in society and in solitude'. Margaret J. M. Ezell, 'John Locke's Images of Childhood: Early Eighteenth-century Response to Some Thoughts Concerning Education', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 17 (1983), pp. 139–155.
[502] Brita Rang, 'An Unidentified Source of John Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education', *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 9 (2001), p. 255.
[503] Warren W. Wooden, 'Classics of Children's Literature, and: From Instruction to Delight', p. 320.

Catharine Macaulay suggesting an educational curriculum which includes the study of the classics, on the other hand we have Hannah More laying emphasis on teaching the Bible to children of tender years. This difference of opinion on the education of girls helps in understanding that women educationalists of the eighteenth century were divided amongst themselves, namely into two groups as mentioned above.

The Sunday School Moralists believed that teaching the Bible to children would not only help them but also their parents. W.M. Jacob observes that 'parents and apprentice masters and mistresses were expected to hear their children and apprentices repeat the Catechism at home […] Children would thus evangelize their parents, and, in their turn, as parents (especially girls, as mothers) establish Christian households.'[504] Thus, when parents listen to Scriptures from their children they, too, are made aware of the moral lessons in the Bible which further helps in establishing an Evangelical society. Jacob, also, lays emphasis on the role of the girl child and the mother in spreading the word of God in society because, says Dinah Birch, women were the 'natural guardians' of faith and religion in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century.[505] Sherwood's Mrs Teachum (1820), in light of this responsibility, seems to ready the girls at her academy by teaching Catechism to future generations in order to maintain a moral society or as W.M Jacob puts it, 'in educating the next godly generation'.[506] Christopher Hibbert and Asa Briggs specifically mention the type of education provided to girls in schools aided by the SPCK and writes that much attention

[504] W.M. Jacob, 'Christian Education and Philanthropy in Eighteenth-Century London Charity Schools', p. 245.
[505] Dinah Birch quotes Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1859) and writes that 'Squire Brown's confidence that the example and teaching of Tom's mother would provide the primary foundation of Tom's religious education is representative of his generation and class.' Later Birch goes on to write that women were identified as guardians of religion. Dinah Birch quotes from a nineteenth-century novel here but I write eighteenth century in the lines above because although Tom is born and educated in nineteenth century, his mother was born and educated in the eighteenth century. Thus, the concept of women being guardians of religion is being carried from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century as Birch observes. 'Education', in *The Cambridge History of Victorian Literature,* ed. by Kate Flint, (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 341.
[506] W.M. Jacob, 'Christian Education and Philanthropy in Eighteenth-Century London Charity Schools', pp. 248-49.

was given to teaching the Bible. The opening prayer in the Sheffield's Girls' Charity School in 1789 was:

> Make me dutiful and obedient to my benefactors, and charitable to my enemies. Make me temperate and chaste, meek and patient, true in all my dealings and content and industrious in my station.[507]

It is clear from these lines that teaching Scriptures, Catechism and the Bible to the girls took precedence over teaching any other subject to them. The inclusion of words such as temperate, chaste, meek and content in the prayer adds to our understanding that such adjectives were attributed to women in the eighteenth century not only in their adulthood but were taught to them in their childhood. Furthermore, the educational curriculum of the SPCK consisted of reading the New Testament in the first year, reading the Bible in the second year, learning to write in the third year and learning arithmetic in the fourth year.[508] In addition to this, they were also taught sewing and needlework. Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) has no instances of the girls learning needlework but writing, reading, and the Bible have been given due importance throughout. It is to be noted that Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) is only a revised version of Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) which replaces only the fairy tales and the instructions of the original Mrs Teachum with verses from the Bible. Sherwood neither changes the plot nor the characters as a result of which we do not witness any teaching of needlework in her version of *The Governess* (1820) irrespective of this activity being the most important lesson in women's academies in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries.[509]

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[507] Both writers mentioned above quote these lines in their respective books in order to elaborate the working of the SPCK schools. Christopher Hibbert, *The English: A Social History* 1066-1945, (London: Guild Publishing, 1987), p. 450; Asa Briggs, *How They Lived. Vol.3, An Anthology of Original Documents Written between 1700 and 1815*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), p. 345.

[508] This curriculum was provided in James Talbot's *The Christian Schoolmaster,* for which see R. W. Unwin, *Charity Schools and the Defence of Anglicanism*, (York, 1984), pp. 25-30.

[509] In Mr Pulman's Academy for girls at Leeds 'Jane Stock and her daughter taught all sorts of Needlework, and Patterns drawn on Cloth or Canvas after the newest Fashion, likewise Paistry, Huswifry, Pickling and Sweet

Jane McDermid digs a little deeper into the aims of these Sunday School Moralists from a gender perspective and observes that 'they saw education, and above all the private study of young ladies, as a means of expanding the confines of the home to embrace society.'[510] These 'conservative women', as McDermid calls them, agreed to the hierarchical norms set by the patriarchal society of the eighteenth century and readily accepted their 'domestic culture and moral authority' as an opportunity to explore the world outside their homes.[511] These women, observes Marilynn Olson, accepted the 'liberal/conservative lines drawn in society as adequate guides' for maintaining not only the differences between the rich and the poor but also between men and women.[512] In Hannah More's *Strictures on Female Education* (1799), discussed in chapter two of this thesis, we come across instances which allow us to understand why critics such as McDermid and Olson accuse the Sunday School moralists of adhering to orthodox traditions. More writes, 'Do we not educate [girls] for a crowd, forgetting that they are to live at home? For the world, and not for themselves? For show, and not for use? For time, and not for eternity?'[513] What we see here is a clear acceptance of subordination irrespective of the fact that these writers talk about reformation of the society and especially of girls through education. Hannah More lays emphasis on critical interpretation for the acquisition of true knowledge but for her the instructions of educators must adhere to Christian principles. Published ten years after the French Revolution and at the beginning of the Romantic era in England, More's *Strictures* (1799)

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meats.' Christopher Hibbert, *The English: A Social History* 1066-1945, pp. 454; Dinah Birch writes that in nineteenth-century educational institutions 'music, fine needlework and drawing for girls' were their main subjects of study. 'Education', in *The Cambridge History of Victorian Literature,* p. 334.

[510] Jane McDermind, 'Conservative feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century', *History of Education*, 18 (4), p. 309.

[511] Ibid.

[512] Marilynn Olson writes about Sarah Trimmer that, 'I found particularly useful the quotations from Trimmer showing how interesting the connections between Trimmer and Rousseau and Trimmer and Sherwood may be. Her assertions, therefore, appear well founded and are reminders, which history should be, that we do not live in the same world, and that the liberal/conservative lines drawn in our society are adequate guides to those positions in the early 19th century.' 'Culturing the Child 1690-1914: Essays in Honor of Mitzi Myers (review).' *Children's Literature Association Quarterly,* 30 (2005), pp. 338-40.

[513] Hannah More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 4.

presents her disapproval of the 'fashionable' eighteenth-century society which requires, according to her, a proper religious guidance.[514] More's own beliefs on the requirement of Scriptural knowledge for salvation presents an irony in her idea of educating women. Irrespective of the *Strictures* being written for women of the aristocratic class, More explains how it can be useful for 'other' women too. Rachael Hewitt, thus, criticizes More for filling the minds of children 'with superstition, bigotry and hypocrisy', and for giving in to the orthodox system of patriarchy and gender differences.[515] Critics such as McDermid and Hewitt acknowledge that 'women were to be the vanguard in the preservation of status quo' but they also make it clear that the conservative or Sunday School moralists continued to work on the lines of orthodox beliefs and hierarchies which limited the scope of any actual literary development of women in the industrialized world.[516]

At a time when religion and educational philosophies on religious education were adding a new chapter to the history books of eighteenth-century England, the role of women in saving a degenerated society from the clutches of debauchery, as mentioned earlier, was brought to light and given due importance.[517] The SPCK lay emphasis on an early religious education of children, especially girls, in the early eighteenth century and the Sunday School

[514] In *The Memoirs of Hannah More* we see the word 'fashionable' being used by her in reference to people, and religion of the eighteenth-century. Not only do we witness her disgust towards the unreligious actions of the French people in overthrowing their own government, but also her disapproval of the excessive emphasis on imagination by the Romantic writers such as Lord Byron. These topics are explored in detail in chapter two of this thesis.

[515] Rachael Hewitt, *A Revolution of Feeling,* (Granta Publications: London, 2018), p. 205.

[516] Jane McDermid, 'Conservative feminism and Female Education in the Eighteenth Century', p. 313.

[517] I use the word degeneration in a nutshell to describe the degrading condition of the eighteenth-century English society as is mentioned by various writers. Michael Foucault writes in *Discipline and Punish* that 'by the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the gloomy festival of punishment was dying out', *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*, (Penguin Books Ltd.: London, 1991), p. 8; Novelist and magistrate Henry Fielding describes the poor condition of children and writes, 'they are young, unprotected and of the female sex, therefore they become the prey of the bawd and the debauchee', Porter, *English Society in the 18th Century,* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 265; Historian Roy Porter, too, mentions the Spiritual Barometer which was printed in the 'Evangelical Magazine' in 1800 which 'tabulated the columns of sin and salvation' for the English society. *English Society in the 18th Century,* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 308.

moralists in the second half of the century took upon themselves the responsibility to carry forward this objective of the SPCK and save England's future generations. Writers such as Hannah More and Charlotte Lennox insisted that the education of girls must begin in early infancy for 'the irregularities of men frequently proceed from the bad education they had imbued from their mothers, and from those passions other women have inspired them with in their riper years.'[518] Thus, this chapter through Mary Martha Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) represents the spread of religious education in girls' academies in the early nineteenth century. Earlier studies on the age of Enlightenment focus more on the education of boys and the education system of various academic institutions. Mitzi Myers explores how male thinkers are easily found in the works of various scholars of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century and how women educationalists are constantly side-lined. She writes how 'Locke, Newbery, Rousseau, Day, Richard Lovell Edgeworth were the ritually invoked parents of late eighteenth and the early nineteenth-century juvenilia, and the women who quickly appropriated the emergent genre were hardly more than daddy's girls.'[519] Myers not only explains that in the eighteenth century male thinkers dominated the literary world but also points out that the women educationalists were merely 'daddy's girls' who followed in the footsteps of male educationalists in order to earn a name for themselves. The works and philosophies of these women educationalists is overshadowed by their counterparts as we have seen in chapter one of this thesis where Henry Fielding's reputation overshadows that of Sarah Fielding's. Boys' schools, universities and colleges fill up the pages of eighteenth and nineteenth-century England's history books, the role of girls'/women's academies is less discussed and their education even less. In relation to this, Deborah Simonton observes that women's education started receiving critical attention only after 1850 as a result of the

[518] Charlotte Lennox, *The Lady's Museum,* (London, 1760, 1761), p. 9.
[519] Mitzi Myers, 'Impeccable Governesses', p. 31.

suffrage movement. The period from 1700-1850, she observes, 'is remarkably gender blind' and 'a virtual desert' in everything that is related to women's education.[520] As a result, an exploration of much less studied, but prominent nonetheless, writers such as Sarah Fielding and Mary Martha Sherwood play a vital role in learning about the girls' academies from 1749-1820. If not an exact recreation of events they provide an unseen perspective that helps in understanding the role of women in the education of girls in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Evangelicalism influenced the educational curriculum of schools as *The Governess* (1820) by Mary Martha Sherwood shall make clear.

MARY MARTHA SHERWOOD

Mary Martha Sherwood's emphasis in *The Governess* (1820) on enhancing one's interpretative skills is a result of her own education and the books she read, which included Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). At the age of five, she writes in her autobiography, 'my brother and I were great readers, though our books were few. *Robinson Crusoe,* two sets of *Fairy Tales*, *The Little Female Academy,* and *Aesop's Fables* formed the whole of our infant library.'[521] Alongside these books she was also taught Latin and the Bible by her mother. Sherwood's autobiography which is explored in detail below helps us in understanding that learning Latin and the Bible was a forced task upon her, which she completed with little interest. Her mind was always in her father's library where she selected books of her own choice to read and to learn from. This is evident from the fact that the books she desired to read she 'begged, and her ever indulgent father gave them to her immediately' whereas on the other hand she 'could recollect no secret working of the Divine Spirit in her heart.'[522] The enhancement of interpretative skills comes into play for Sherwood

[520] Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), p.33.
[521] Sophia Kelly, *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood: (chiefly Autobiographical) with Extracts from Mr Sherwood's Journal during His Imprisonment in France & Residence in India*, (London: Darton and Co., 1857), p. 37.
[522] Ibid, p. 53, 92.

when her father taught her 'to examine the editions' in his library.[523] She continues explaining in her autobiography how she 'was permitted to go every day, to help him to turn them over for examination and reading.'[524] In there she read John Barclay's *Arjenis* (1621), Jeronimo Fernandez's *Don Belianis of Greece* (1545), Philip Sydney's *Arcadia* (1593) and many other classics. Her father taught her to 'examine the editions, and she was then as well acquainted with the name of Elzivir, and others, as any old connoisseur in scarce editions.'[525] Learning to examine the books developed the interpretative skills of Sherwood because she comments right after that 'by this exercise she learned a number of names of books, and got some idea of their subjects, and the times when their authors had lived.'[526] She studied those books 'till every scene of it became familiar' to her.[527] All this points towards the fact that she read every book thoroughly and that this method of learning was emphasized by her father whom she held in high regard throughout her life.[528] Thus, in order to understand how Sherwood learned to critically interpret books and its importance as an educational practice this chapter mentions and critically examines her own schooling (both at home and in the academy), her interest in studying fairy tales, and her stay in India from her autobiography below.

The Life of Mrs Sherwood started in 1853 and published in 1857 by Sherwood's daughter Sophia Kelly is a primary source for this chapter. It helps in understanding Sherwood's own childhood, her education and her career as a writer in detail. Kelly mentions in the preface that 'I was called upon to fulfil a task she had herself imposed upon me in

[523] Ibid, p. 53.
[524] Ibid.
[525] Ibid.
[526] Ibid, p. 54.
[527] Ibid.
[528] It was her father who motivated her to publish *Traditions* (1794), her first book. Although, she was not very happy about it because she knew that the book lacked literary excellence. For her '*The Traditions,* when completed for the press, exhibited a mind very, very far from maturity.' Only later in her autobiography do we get to know that Sherwood appreciated her father for encouraging her to write and to produce excellent works. Ibid, p. 118.

happier hours, of preparing the records of her life for publication.'[529] The biography by Kelly is a compiled version of Sherwood's handwritten accounts 'of her own recollections' from her voluminous journal of fifteen volumes. Hence, Sherwood's journal is the autobiography which Sophia Kelly 'had but to copy and send it forth to the world' in the form of *The Life.*[530] Irrespective of Kelly highlighting the fact that Sherwood's journal was 'too faithful a record of past events' this chapter critically examines her autobiography as a series of events which were compiled only from Sherwood's perspective and takes into consideration instances that help in understanding her education and her life as an Evangelical author.[531]

SHERWOOD'S OWN INTEREST IN FAIRY TALES

Mary Martha Sherwood (1775-1851), formerly Mary Martha Butt, was the eldest daughter of Martha Butt and Reverend George Butt, 'a clergyman of the Church of England'.[532] In her autobiography Sherwood describes herself as a naïve child who spent her afternoons studying Virgil (taught by her mother) with an iron collar around her neck and her evenings in the woods telling fairy tales to a wooden doll. She writes,

> It was the fashion then for children to wear iron collars round the neck, with a backboard strapped over the shoulders: to one of these I was subjected from my sixth to my thirteenth year. It was put on in the morning, and seldom taken off till late in the evening […] Yet I was a very happy child; and when relieved from my collar, I not unseldom manifested my delight by starting from our hall-door, and taking a run for at least half a mile through the woods which adjoined our pleasure grounds.[533]

The most shocking item in the above lines is the iron collar which was used by Sherwood's mother in her education. Historical accounts of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries

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[529] Sophia Kelly, *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood: (chiefly Autobiographical) with Extracts from Mr Sherwood's Journal during His Imprisonment in France & Residence in India*, (London: Darton and Co., 1857), p. iii.
[530] Ibid.
[531] Ibid.
[532] Ibid, p. 110.
[533] Ibid, pp. 36-7.

mention the use of birch or stick at schools as a common way of disciplining the children but there is no such mention of an iron collar round the child's neck.[534] According to her own account, Sherwood was subjected to this iron-collar from morning to evening. She was only allowed 'dry bread and cold milk' as lunch in the afternoon and was never allowed to sit during her lessons or in the presence of her mother.[535] The below paragraphs explore and differentiate the education received by Sherwood from her father and from her mother and focus primarily on the role played by fairy tales in her childhood.

There was a stark contrast in the educational methods of Mr Butt and Mrs Butt and it is this difference which helps us in understanding how Sherwood learnt to critically interpret books and furthermore, the role played by books containing fairy tales. Her father's library, called the 'Black Library' because of the black calfskin binding on the books he had, was the major source of her knowledge.[536] In there, at the age of five, she read *Robinson Crusoe,* Fielding's *The Little Female Academy,* Aesop's Fables and two sets of fairy tales.[537] She also read John Barclay's *Arjenis* (1621) and Sir Philip Sydney's *Arcadia* (1593) along-with 'many of the classics, with the finest old editions'.[538] She had also completed Frances Burney's *Cecilia* by the time she was fourteen.[539] Her father's library, therefore, provided to Sherwood what her mother's lessons could not. It not only helped her in reading Frances Burney, Philip Sydney or Daniel Defoe but also in getting access to Aesop's fables and Fielding's fairy tales

[534] Historian Christopher Hibbert traces the development of education in England from the thirteenth to the twentieth century and explores the use of birch by schoolmasters. He writes that children were not allowed to sit down in the presence of their parents without permission. 'When young, most were regularly beaten, girls as well as boys.' With the progress of time the use of birch was criticized by various thinkers and Hibbert mentions how 'nearly all seventeenth-century writers urged that the birch should be used in moderation.' Therefore, corporal punishment was to be the last resort for schoolmasters and even that was criticized with the coming of the eighteenth century. *The English: A Social History* 1066-1945, (London: Guild Publishing, 1987), p. 112, 269.
[535] Kelly, *The Life of Mrs Sherwood,* pp. 36-7.
[536] Ibid, p. 53.
[537] Ibid, p. 37.
[538] Ibid.
[539] Ibid, p. 74.

in *The Governess* (1749) along-with many others. Hence, fairy tales too, either in her father's library or in the woods not only provided relief to Sherwood from the burdensome iron collar but they also became her favourite pastimes which eventually helped in the improvement of her interpretative skills.

Mr Butt never stopped Sherwood from reading any book from his library and never forced her to read, unlike her mother, the Bible. Sherwood, thus, appreciates her father for his judicious freedom in her autobiography and writes,

> To direct a mind to the apprehension and enjoyment of spiritual things, all who understand the Scriptures must know to be impossible; but to give the mind a bent of things intellectual and temporal, is often done by parents.[540]

Mr Butt 'was a clergyman in the Church of England' and thus understood the Scriptures very well as Sherwood explains in these lines. She appreciates her father and simultaneously explains how the mind of a child cannot be taught to enjoy the Bible or 'spiritual things' until it comes of age and develops an inclination for it. She further explains how parents must direct their children towards 'intellectual' books which not only help them in accumulating knowledge but also in the development of their mental (interpreting) skills in a progressive ('temporal') manner. Mr Butt, from Sherwood's remarks, happens to do just the same for her. Her remarks remind us of Catharine Macaulay's remarks on the education of children and how she restricted in her proposed educational curriculum the study of religious books until the student attained the age of twenty. Therefore, a child's mind even at the age of fifteen, according to Sherwood, is inexperienced and undeveloped for interpreting and understanding the Bible, yet the central theme of *The Governess* (1820) is to teach Scriptures to children who are all below the age of fifteen.

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[540] Ibid, p. 53.

Sherwood's mother, on the other hand, taught her Latin as a result of which she was able to produce rough translations of Virgil before the age of nine. Her mother also made her learn the Bible as an everyday exercise. However, as mentioned earlier, the dry bread, the cold milk, not being allowed to sit down and study and not being allowed to sit in the presence of her mother are subjects which receive less commentary from Sherwood in her autobiography. Instead she focuses more on the freedom from the iron collar at the end of each day as she expresses her extreme delight in 'starting from our hall-door, and taking a run for at least half a mile through the woods'. Sherwood's everyday escapades into the woods help us in understanding her internal desire to escape her mother's unconventional teaching methods, methods which find little resistance from Sherwood in her autobiography.

She describes the time spent under the supervision of her mother as a 'daily task' and explains how after enduring the iron collar for an entire day she used to run to the woods near her house in Stanford with a book and a wooden doll.

> In those sweet woods I had many little embowered corners which no one knew but myself, and there when my daily tasks were done, I used to fly with a book and enjoy myself in places where I could hear the cooing of doves, the note of the blackbird, and the rush of two waterfalls coming from two sides of the valley and meeting within the range where I might stroll undisturbed by anyone.[541]

The natural imagery presented in these lines describe freedom which was sought after by Sherwood in a number of ways. 'Flying with a book' implies the urgency of getting out of the iron collar; the dove represents the peace sought by Sherwood, and the 'rush of the two waterfalls' further hints towards Sherwood's eagerness to get out of her home and into the woods where she 'might stroll undisturbed by anyone'. In those silent places she used to read, create and enjoy fairy tales which, as we shall see, initially became sources of her summer

[541] Ibid, p. 50.

pastimes and later an exercise in the development of her interpretative skills, because she started mixing pedagogical discourses (inspired from *Adelaide and Theodore* (1783)) into those stories.[542] Sherwood describes how she carried a book and a wooden doll to the woods and when the Butt family moved to the 'dirty suburbs' of Kidderminster in 1788, which is as she describes them, she regretted the loss of the 'wild woods and deep glens of Stanford' where she 'invented tales of fairyland and visions of paradise.'[543] Furthermore, Sherwood terms those tales as 'harmless imaginations' which helped her in surviving the 'dirty environment' of Kidderminster.[544] She writes how she,

> Filled every region of the wild woods of Stanford with imaginary people. Wherever I saw a few ashes in a glade, left by those who burnt sticks to sell the ashes, to assist in the coarse washings in farm-houses, I fixed a hoard of gipsies, and made long stories. If I could discern fairy rings, which abounded in those woods, they gave me another set of images; and I had imaginary hermits in every hollow of the rocky sides of the dingle, and imaginary castles on every height, whilst the church and the churchyard supplied me with more ghosts and apparitions than I dared to tell of. Those persons who are without imagination can have no idea of the mode of existence of one who has.[545]

She invented new characters and told new stories to her sisters but that was not all. Inspired by Madame de Genlis's *Adelaide and Theodore* the development of Sherwood's interpretative skills over time is reflected in the pedagogical themes of her fictional stories. *Adelaide and Theodore* is the same book which inspired Catharine Macaulay, mentioned in chapter two of this thesis, in formulating a curriculum for the education of children. Sherwood's choice of books from her father's library along-with the books taught by her mother present a major similarity with Macaulay's prescribed curriculum in *Letters on*

[542] Sherwood read the original French version written by Madame de Genlis. We know this because she writes later in her autobiography that studying the book and its characters was a difficult task since 'they were in French'. She also explains that irrespective of being 'well instructed at Reading' she was not fluent in French. Ibid, p. 124.
[543] Ibid, p. 60.
[544] Ibid.
[545] Ibid, p. 54.

Education (1790). Macaulay's educational curriculum has a list of specific books to be studied in an orderly manner from the age of ten to twenty-one.[546] She suggests reading famous fables at the age of ten; Sherwood finished Aesop's fables at the age of five. Macaulay considers Plutarch to be suitable reading material for children of twelve; Sherwood was fluent in translating Virgil at the age of nine. At fourteen Macaulay writes that children should read French and English histories; Sherwood was busy reading Madame de Genlis's *Adelaide and Theodore.* Further, at the age of nineteen Macaulay suggests teaching Philip Sydney or John Locke to children; Sherwood completed reading Sydney's *Arcadia.* Lastly, at the age of twenty Macaulay suggests teaching Ovid or Hesiod, and Sherwood read the Greek authors such as Homer at the same age. Therefore, we see how Sherwood's choice of books in their respective age groups mirror Macaulay's suggestions from her curriculum. The only major difference is that Sherwood was taught the Bible from the beginning whereas Macaulay only prescribes studying it at the age of twenty one. However, Sherwood in her autobiography expresses discontent towards an early religious education of children and, once again, her remarks echo those of Macaulay.

Coming back to Sherwood's interest in fairy tales, in the summer of 1794 one of the favourite pastimes of Sherwood and her sister was 'a course of letters to each other, assuming French characters, on the plan of *Adele et Theodore* (read by her at the age of twelve). They wrote each a letter every week, and introduced stories and anecdotes.'[547]

> With Margaret and my sister Lucy for my auditors, I repeated stories, one story often going on at every possible interval for months together […] I knew nothing of life as it is, but my mind was familiar with fairies, enchanters, wizards, and all the imagery of heathen gods and goddesses which I could get out of any book in my father's study.[548]

[546] See p. 126 in chapter two of this thesis.
[547] Ibid, p. 124.
[548] Ibid, pp. 49-50.

Following Madame de Genlis's epistolary style of writing Sherwood and Lucy, assuming themselves as French, wrote letters to each other in French which, as she describes in her autobiography, 'was hard work and required much study'.[549] Her creativity, which also reflects some development in her interpretative skills, is to be identified not only with her knowledge of the French language but also with her ability to use an epistolary style of writing fairy tales and inserting anecdotes in those letters.[550] The span of ten years from 1784 when she repeatedly read stories to her sister to 1794 when she created stories of her own helps us in understanding Sherwood's progress in creative skills. Fairy tales, thus, played a very important role in Sherwood's life, not only in the development of her interpretative skills as we see here but also as the only means of emotional support in her childhood. However, Sherwood rejects the usefulness of fairy tales in the overall intellectual development of a child or of their any use in the educational curriculum in *The Governess* (1820) which I discuss in detail later in the chapter.

HOW SHERWOOD ADHERED TO MACAULAY'S PRINCIPLES

Before she was sent to Monsieur and Madame St Quentin's School in the Old Abbey at Reading at the age of fifteen Sherwood was already in possession of a vast amount of knowledge which she had gained partly from her father's library and partly from her mother's lessons in Latin 'standing in the same stocks with the iron collar pressing on her throat'.[551] Sherwood in her autobiography recollects very little of her literary advancement at Reading, instead she writes more of her journey towards Evangelicalism, which became the real

[549] Ibid.

[550] However, Sherwood admits that she still lacked a firm grip on the French language and that she sent these letters 'to be corrected to M. St Q'. She was sent to Monsieur and Madame St Quentin's School in the Old Abbey at Reading in 1790. Ibid.

[551] She also mentions how her brother on his vacations taught her the Greek verbs and provided her with Greek classics such as Homer's *Iliad* at the age of twenty. She writes, my brother instructed me in 'botany and persuaded' me 'to learn Greek. He taught me the verbs when walking out, and put me at once into Homer, and I continued the study till I had read the first six books.' Kelly, *The Life of Mrs Sherwood*, p. 152.

religion for her.[552] She frames her conversion to Evangelical Christianity as a journey of enlightenment. As a child she believed heaven to be above the clouds and hell to be underground, and to seek the former and to avoid the latter. She was taught that 'God alone was the fit object of worship.'[553] She was taught to read the Bible and understand the sinful nature of human beings. Her mother took her to the Church every Sunday and Sherwood listened eagerly to the sermons in order to summarize them for her mother back home. However, when she recollects these incidents in her autobiography she lays emphasis on her immature mind which lacked the experience and the knowledge to interpret or understand moral messages from the Bible or the sermons. She writes,

> I was not capable of receiving the gospel while in an unregenerate state, for it is only by the enlightening and unerring influences of the Spirit one can receive *the truth as it is in Jesus.* From a child I had read the word of God, and that word is truth; but I had not the moral capacity to receive anything more than an historical view of it.[554]

These lines help us in further understanding why her mother's lessons were merely a 'daily task' for Sherwood rather than being educational. Before being sent to St Quentin Sherwood was already accustomed to reading the Bible and she could easily recite verses from it but she was unable to understand their true meanings and gained only a 'historical view' of Biblical events.[555] She considers her 'unregenerate state' of mind, as she writes in her autobiography, in her childhood as the reason behind her failure to understand the Scriptures. Furthermore, she terms it as 'moral' incapacity in a child as a result of which he is incapable of understanding religion at a very young age. According to Sherwood, it is only by the 'unerring influence of the Spirit' that one takes interest in, reads and understands the Bible

[552] She forgives her parents for keeping her ignorant of the 'real religion' to which she was introduced only after her marriage. Ibid, p. 110.
[553] Ibid, p. 110.
[554] Ibid.
[555] She was able to translate Virgil as a result of her mother's teachings at a very early age, although, there is no mention that she was able to understand it. Similarly, she recited verses from the Bible without having any understanding of their meanings.

unlike herself who was taught to read the Bible every day merely out of habit (daily task) by her mother. At St Quentin she was beyond her mother's harsh teaching and out of the iron collar, and in her autobiography, possibly for these reasons, she clearly expresses how 'after a while her Bible never saw the light' and how she began 'to think less of what would please her mother than of what would promote her own pleasure.'[556] As a result her initial novels and plays, as she describes in her autobiography, were definitely 'not a jest upon religion'.[557]

The Traditions and *Margarita* published in 1795 are categorized as sentimental novels by various critics and also by her biographer M. Nancy Cutt who writes that Sherwood was 'at heart a Romantic; being also a novelist, had at her fingertips the fictional elements of sentiment and romance.'[558] Sherwood, identifying herself with Miss Jenny Bickerstaff from the *Tattler,* comments in her autobiography that *The Traditions* 'exhibited a mind very, very far from maturity'.[559] In 1797 Sherwood along-with her sister was 'engaged by the curate of the Low Church at Bridgenorth to take charge of his Sunday-School.'[560] She worked diligently at the school and even wrote *Susan Grey* (1802) 'for the elder girls' studying there.[561] Interestingly, it, too, is a sentimental book which Patricia Demers terms as a 'purified *Pamela'.*[562] It narrates the story of an orphan servant girl, Susan, who resists the advances of a military officer. The novel, explains Sherwood, 'naturally turned upon the especial circumstances of the times, when every town was filled with military men, who were

[556] If Sherwood's action of not reading the Bible at St Quentin is an expression of dislike towards her mother's way of teaching then her remarks on her father's way of teaching further supports the claim of this thesis that an early religious education renders little benefit to children. Kelly, *Life of Mrs Sherwood,* p. 92.
[557] She wrote a play in 1789, *The Widow's Prayer-Book,* which hints towards it having many religious references but Sherwood explicitly states that 'it was not a jest upon religion, I am happy to say, though the same might lead a person to suppose so.' The same is true for her later publication. Ibid, p. 74.
[558] M. Nancy Cutt, *Mrs Sherwood and Her Books for Children,* (OUP: London, 1974), p. 37.
[559] Kelly, *The Life of Mrs Sherwood,* pp. 118-19.
[560] Ibid, p. 153.
[561] Ibid.
[562] Patricia Demers, 'Mrs. Sherwood and Hesba Stretton: The Letter and Spirit of Evangelical Writing for Children', *Romanticism and Children's Literature in Nineteenth-century England*, ed. Jr. James Holt McGavran, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), p. 143.

there today and gone tomorrow.'[563] From these instances it becomes clear that after graduating from St Quentin's Sherwood took no interest in studying religious books or indulging in religious affairs despite being the daughter of a churchman or her teaching at a Sunday-School. She goes the distance in her autobiography and writes, 'I would at any time of my youth rather have been a heroine of romance than a celebrated authoress' which justifies her choice of themes (sentiment and romance) in her initial novels.[564] The Bible re-enters her life after her marriage in 1803 with Captain Henry Sherwood and her religious interests undergo an Evangelical transformation during her stay in India from 1805 to 1816 under the influence of Rev Martyn and Rev Parson.

The previous paragraphs help us in understanding that Sherwood received a diverse education at home and at school in which fairy tales played an important role (during her summer pastimes) in the development of her interpretative skills. They also help in understanding Sherwood's faint interest in religious studies and how the themes of her sentimental novels and plays support that claim. Therefore, from what Sherwood presents in her autobiography, as a child she was uninterested in studying the Bible irrespective of being able to recite verses from it because she was unable to fully understand those verses. The interest only developed after her marriage. She writes,

> I began the Scriptures there (Sunderland), and continued to read them in other places, till I read them to the end, beginning again when I came to the conclusion. This constant reading a certain portion every day I carried on for years.[565]

Sherwood describes how she read the Bible every day in these lines and from her routine it is clear that repetition forms part of the process which leads to a thorough understanding of any text. The second step includes the study of 'a certain portion' everyday 'for years'. Thus, it is

[563] Kelly, *Life of Mrs Sherwood*, p. 207.
[564] Ibid, p. 52.
[565] Ibid, pp. 236-37.

not an easy task which can be completed in a few days, weeks or months. It requires immense practice and experience in learning the skill to properly interpret texts over time. Lastly, Sherwood started reading the Bible with this routine only at the age of twenty eight when she had already finished studying other intellectual books mentioned earlier, and only when she had a self-interest in pursuing 'true religion' and religious writings. The above lines also, once again, highlight the fact that Sherwood unconsciously follows Macaulay's educational curriculum and pursues the study of sacred writings only out of self-interest and that too after the age of twenty-one. Therefore, introducing the Bible to children in an early stage of their education, as presented by Sherwood in her autobiography with her own example, renders little help in the development of their interpretative skills which must be developed initially through practice from other books. However, what is more interesting to note is even after acknowledging the fact that children require experience and immense practice in interpretation, Sherwood rewrote Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) and added numerous Biblical messages and verses from the Bible for her younger audience of the early nineteenth century. This is completely at odds with her own understanding of a child's education and helps me in establishing *The Governess* (1820) as an outcome of the Evangelical movement rather than an outcome of her personal experiences and beliefs as an author.

SHERWOOD AND EVANGELICALISM

Sherwood writes of her husband as a man with an open mind but one who is devoid of any serious religious sentiments. Immediately after their marriage he let her know in a very composed manner that 'he was not quite convinced that the whole of the Bible was true, although he thought parts of it might be so.'[566] This alarmed Sherwood at first but his non-interference with her religious activities such as going to the church gradually removed her

[566] Ibid, p. 237.

doubts. Sherwood's remarks in her autobiography discussed above in which she reflects upon her own education, allows us to understand that, according to Sherwood, teaching the Bible to children at an early age is of little use but the child can pursue a more concentrated study of the Bible after developing good interpretative skills from the perusal of other intellectual books. Unlike her mother's routine Bible classes, Sherwood herself started reading the Bible out of self-interest at a very later age because Mr Sherwood's remarks were a bit alarming for her. The couple moved to India in 1805 'restless with expectation' and filled with excitement to experience the 'Oriental pomp and luxury' but little did they know that the following ten years would change their lives in a number of ways.[567] After a few days of their arrival in India Sherwood opened a 'regimental school' in the cantonment area. Her primary reason, she writes in her autobiography, was to provide some sort of schooling to children of other British officers posted there. Her past experience of teaching at the Sunday School of Bridgenorth helped further advance her cause. The second reason, which clearly exemplifies an imperial aspect, given by Sherwood was to educate 'this heathen population (of India), who were living wholly without a knowledge of our God and our Redeemer.'[568] Therefore, she also admitted children of the rich merchants of the neighbouring areas into her school where the Bible formed a major part of her teaching curriculum. She held classes from eight to twelve on weekdays in her own barrack but the school was shut down after the death of her eldest son, Henry, in 1807. He died just fourteen months after his birth. This event initiated the process of Sherwood's transformation into an Evangelical.

Rev Parson, one of the three chaplains from Cambridge, the other being Rev Martyn and Rev Corrie, helped Sherwood overcome her grief as he explained to her that the solution

[567] Ibid, p. 266.
[568] Ibid, p. 288.

lay in the Scriptures.[569] He explained to her how the suffering of Christ was far greater than her own which immediately affected Sherwood who apologized for 'remaining blind to this Doctrine when reading the Bible'.[570] She praises Mr Parson for helping her realize this and writes, 'I found immediate comfort in the doctrine; it was the comfort of one who, having long felt himself sick, finds the nature of his disease and its remedy laid open before him.'[571] Religion in these lines works as a double edged sword that helps not only in overcoming grief by providing an immediate consolation but also restricts the scope of an individual to understand or believe in anything outside the purview of the Scriptures. Mr Parson provided relief to Sherwood by explaining to her about the greater suffering of the Christ and preached Evangelicalism, the work he was sent to India for, simultaneously. Anne Scott talks about this double advantage of religion and writes, 'Religion provided an opportunity for self-fulfilment and self-expression. It dispensed consolation and sometimes legitimated protest. It empowered and liberated at the same time as it constrained and suppressed.[572] Scott explains the broad spectrum of religion which allowed freedom and restrictions at the same time in the nineteenth century. According to her, freedom was provided in the belief of being separated from the ills of society which helped develop a sense of 'self-fulfilment' whereas restrictions were engulfed in the excuse that no other book taught morality like the books on religion. It is significant to mention here that, like Rev Newton assisted Hannah More's religious

[569] Unlike Mr Parson or Mr Martyn who took the missionary mission to great heights, Mr Corrie worked on completely opposite terms. Sherwood describes him as the chaplain who ignored the Church's guidelines and instead worked on the principles of true charity by helping people without any regard for recognition in return. 'He was ever engaged, even beyond his strength and means, in doing good to his fellow creatures, but with so little display and pretention that his most intimate friends hardly knew the half he did' and this probably was the reason, writes Sherwood, why so little 'has been said of him in Missionary Registers.' Sherwood regarded Mr Corrie as a better man than Mr Martyn or Mr Parson when she writes that he was 'perhaps the most useful man, of the Established Church, who ever set his foot on Indian ground.' Mr Corrie's helpful nature, selfless charity and his style of spreading the message of the Bible without actually holding the Bible in his hands pulled Sherwood towards Evangelicalism even more. Ibid, p. 359.

[570] Ibid, p. 303.

[571] Ibid, p. 304.

[572] Anne Scott, 'Women and Religion', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 100-23, p. 117.

transformation into an Evangelical in chapter two of this thesis, Rev Parson assisted Mary Martha Sherwood here.

As a result of her newly found confidence in God Sherwood wrote books on Evangelicalism, anti-Catholicism, Colonialism and Victorianism. Her first book, *The History of Little Henry and His Bearer* (1814), which she wrote during her stay in India was the stepping stone of her famed career. As she continued writing her titles started in the manner of, 'The History of […]', marking a style that is visible in the re-writing of *The Governess: or the Little Female Academy* (1820). She also tried to have parts of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) in her book *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818) in which she describes the lives of Indian monks, fakirs and priests. After her return to England she wrote her own version of the *Pilgrim's Progress* as *The Infant's Progress* in 1821 in which she represents the fight with the in-bred sin on the way to heaven. The major theme of the book is to have a strong belief in God for every phase of life.

The Governess (1820), too, is an outcome of the Evangelical influence developed in Sherwood by her chaplains in India because it is a book that is at odds with her own experiences and her earlier beliefs on the education of children. In re-writing *The Governess,* Sherwood, through Mrs Teachum, teaches the nine girls about God and how they can relieve themselves of their sins through prayers and God's guidance. She tries to preach that the path to knowledge and civility originates from God. Sherwood makes it clear in her novel that we should fear the Lord, we should prepare youngsters in the most perfect standards of Christianity, that we should never outrage God with our ravenousness. God is the one who made us unadulterated and we debased the earth. Insidious men and malice angels have awful spirits yet the adherents of the Lord have an alternate soul. We should look for help in God, we should discover harmony, and we should live to love and dread God. We should peruse the sacred writings, we should appeal to God for insight and we should regard the intensity of

the gospel. We should thank the omnipotent God and have belief that He will assist us in being good. However, when Sherwood was being taught the same by her mother in her childhood she had different thoughts. In her autobiography she explains how her 'mind at that time was undoubtedly much engaged by religious subjects, although in total darkness as it regarded Christian doctrines, not one of which did I then comprehend.'[573] If Mrs Sherwood was unable to comprehend the morals of scriptures into her ways of life in her childhood, *The Governess* (1820), then, is clearly not an outcome of that experience.

SHERWOOD'S *THE LITTLE FEMALE ACADEMY* (1820)

Mary Martha Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) follows the same plot, form and characters of Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). Mrs Teachum in the new version is once again the governess of her academy and in charge of nine young girls. The novel presents a week in the life of the girls at the academy to the readers. The same plot has been retained by Sherwood throughout as the novel begins with the fight over an apple and ends with the departure of Miss Jenny Peace from the academy. Mrs Teachum follows the same teaching method in which she lays emphasis not only on the intellectual development of the girls through reading and writing but also on their physical well-being through regular evening walks. In the absence of Mrs Teachum, Miss Jenny being the eldest, monitors the class and, as in the original version, reads stories to them. The girls, too, after understanding their shortcomings relate the same autobiographies to each other in the same order as they did in the previous version. However, Sherwood makes a major change in the theme of the novel. Fielding lays emphasis on the development of the girls' interpretative skills by teaching them to closely examine everything they read whereas Sherwood in her version focuses only on the perusal of the Bible for learning every moral lesson. It is for this reason that Sherwood's *The*

[573] Ibid, p.209.

Governess (1820) is a fine example, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, for understanding the role of Evangelicalism in the education of children in the early nineteenth century.

Mary Martha Sherwood writes in the introduction to her version of *The Governess* (1820) that 'she found it necessary to make more alterations in it than she at first intended.'[574] She not only alters one of the three fairy tales but also substitutes the other 'with such appropriate relations as seemed more likely to conduce to juvenile edification.'[575] Furthermore, in addition to a change in the order of days of the week she changes the names of the chapters and replaces them with ones that suit a religious introduction. For example the title of chapter two in the 1749 version is 'A Dialogue between Miss Jenny Peace and Miss Sukey Jennett; wherein the latter is at last convinced of her own Folly in being so quarrelsome', whereas in the 1820 version it is 'A dialogue between Miss Jenny Peace and Miss Sukey Jennett; wherein the latter is convinced of her Sin and Folly in being so quarrelsome.'[576] The only difference is the addition of the word sin by Sherwood. Similarly, the title of chapter three in the 1749 version is 'A Scene of love and friendship, quite the reverse of the battle; wherein are shown the different effects of Love and Goodness from those attending anger, strife and wickedness', whereas in the 1820 version the title is 'A Scene of love and friendship, quite the reverse of the battle; wherein is shown how different are the effects of Christian Charity from those which are produced by anger, strife and wickedness.'[577] Therefore, keeping in mind Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749), Sherwood's emphasis on the Bible in her version of the book helps us in understanding Evangelicalism's growth and its role in the education of children in the early nineteenth

[574] Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. iv.
[575] Ibid.
[576] Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 7; Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. 18.
[577] Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 9; Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. 25.

century. It is, therefore, necessary to first highlight certain examples from Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) that support this cause before critically analysing other reasons for the development of this form of religion.

In the 1749 version of *The Governess* we see that building up the internal and external appearances of a girl child are significant parts of her education, that friendliness, love and warmth make amicable networks, that friendship is a significant viewpoint in instruction. Yet, as we move to the 1820 version we see that all the nine young ladies are taught following a more narrowly doctrinal set of ideals. Mrs Teachum is given a different characterisation. She is represented chiefly as a woman who accepts and fears God, one who imparts the lessons of Bible in her students and wishes to raise them as the last descendants of Christianity to spread the word of God. Mrs Teachum, the central character in *The Governess,* is Sherwood's preacher and the teacher in the academy. She is the one who teaches the nine girls in the ways of Christianity and tries to instil Biblical morals in her lessons on every available opportunity. In the first chapter when Mrs Teachum witnesses the girls fighting over an apple she,

> Silenced the whole party; and ordering them into the house, she took the basket of apples and followed them in […] she confessed before God the sinful state of the human heart, and implored pardon for all around her, through the blood of Christ.[578]

Mrs Teachum addresses the young girls and tries to explain the 'sinful state of the human heart' that lured them towards selfishness and fight. She further asks them to repent and to ask for forgiveness from God, herself doing the same. On the other hand, Mrs Teachum in 1749 finds them all 'equally guilty' and handles the situation by making the girls embrace one another. Thus, from the beginning of the novel we see this characteristic change in Mrs

[578] Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. 25.

Teachum in Sherwood's version. Nandini Bhattacharya focuses more on the Colonial aspect in Sherwood's works as mentioned earlier but her findings also help in understanding Sherwood's emphasis on the Bible in *The Governess* (1820). She writes, 'Sherwood's fiction […] reflects a particularly powerful era of western society's anxiety to control the representation of a child in order to establish an unassailable colony.'[579] Although Bhattacharya writes this in the Indian context as she explains the adverse effects of England's missionary project in India which focused on teaching a foreign religion to a foreign population, this observation also stands true in light of the changing educational trend in England in the nineteenth century. The emphasis on the Bible as we see in *The Governess* (1820) is an example of the rising role of Evangelicalism in English schools, and as Bhattacharya groups Sherwood with missionaries in India during her stay from 1805-1816, I explore Evangelicalism as an offshoot of that colonial project and represent the changes in the educational institutions of early nineteenth-century England. The changes, therefore, made by Sherwood in her version of *The Governess* (1820) represent the 'western society's anxiety to control' not only a foreign land but also the education of children in their own country.[580]

The next example is a major contrast between the two versions of the novel. It is Mrs Teachum's remarks on reading fairy tales. As we saw in chapter one of this thesis, Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum in 1749 makes it clear that although fairy tales are an improper source of learning they can still provide moralistic lessons when properly interpreted. She, therefore, lays emphasis on teaching children to develop their interpretative skills in order to interpret not only the plot of a fairy tale but also its characters. However, seven decades later Sherwood's Mrs Teachum in 1820 rejects the reading of fairy tales altogether and instead

[579] Bhattacharya, 'Maternal plots, Colonialist Fictions: Colonial Pedagogy in Mary Martha Sherwood's Children's Stories', pp. 405-06.
[580] Ibid.

asks Miss Jenny to read the Bible to children. An important thing to note here is that Miss Jenny, in both the versions, choses to read a fairy tale on her own and that it is only the instructions of Mrs Teachum that produce the differences between the two versions of the novel. In 1749 Jenny reads the story of the two giants and in 1820 she reads the story of 'The History of Princess Rosalinda'.[581] In 1749 Mrs Teachum asks Miss Jenny to interpret the fairy tale whereas in 1820 Mrs Teachum asks her to read the Bible instead. She says,

> I do not intend by this to blame you for what you have done; but I only wish my dear child, to lead you from these trifles to better things…you know also how necessary it is not to lose any opportunity of inculcating these doctrines on the minds of young people, according to that scriptural direction: *For precept must be upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.* (Isaiah xxviii. 10) I do not, however, always prohibit fairy tales, my dear child: but when you next have occasion to read to your companions, apply to me, and I will endeavour to furnish you with some story of a superior tendency to the common run of amusing tales.[582]

Irrespective of Mrs Teachum telling Jenny that she has no objection to fairy tales now and then, it is clear from her words that follow soon after that she prefers the Bible over everything else. The stories in the Bible are 'of a superior tendency', according to her, which provide moral lessons in a manner much exquisite than any other source, especially fairy tales. From Mrs Teachum's instructions to Miss Jenny it is evident that she desires to take every 'opportunity of inculcating these doctrines' to the girls even when they are fighting

[581] It tells the story of a king and his 'proud, selfish and capricious' wife who focus only on fulfilling their daughter's wishes and neglected her education. All the servants in the palace were annoyed as a result of the princess's behaviour and attitude, and nicknamed her as the 'little tyrant'. As the story progresses, one day the queen saves a bird which happens to be the pet of the fairy queen Serena whose kingdom shared boundaries with that of the king's. Serena warns the king and the queen that it is necessary to teach the princess Rosalinda the importance of self-command and thus proposes to takes her to the fairy-land where she would be taught by a 'wise and conscientious governess'. The king and the queen agree and the princess is sent away with Serena. Rosalinda asks Serena to remove the governess arguing that she desires to care of herself in her own ways. The queen accepts (not without a plan) and turns a mirror into Rosalinda's exact copy whom she might govern according to her own ways. The second Rosalinda behaved in a similar manner which brought the original Rosalinda to a realization of her mistakes. She requested Serena to bring back the governess and agreed to comply with all her instructions. Thus, the princess 'discarded self', became obedient and 'more excellent in mental accomplishments' by the end of the story. Sherwood, *The Governess,* pp. 45-87.

[582] Ibid, pp. 97-8.

over an apple or when they are reading fairy tales. Mrs Teachum in 1820 lays emphasis on 'the preparation of heart in order to render the word of God acceptable' whereas in 1749 Mrs Teachum focuses on developing the interpretative skills of children in order for them to derive moral lessons even from a fairy tale.[583] When Sherwood writes that every opportunity must be seized to inculcate Biblical doctrines in the minds of young girls Ashok Malhotra's analysis of *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818) helps us in understanding that the preference given to the Bible over studying other books by Sherwood is a result of her connections with Evangelists during her stay in India.

Malhotra writes that 'the significance of this particular narrative was that it was authored under the direction and patronage of influential Evangelical chaplains in India, such as Henry Martyn and Daniel Corrie.'[584] Since Mr Martyn was the one who helped Sherwood accept Evangelicalism it is highly possible that the chaplain influenced her writings too. Malhotra examines Sherwood's *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818) from this perspective whereas I explore *The Governess* published two years later in 1820 to be, also, a result of Sherwood's Evangelical transformation rather than it being a literary product of an educational discourse. According to Malhotra, '*The Indian Pilgrim's* plot devices, structure and imagery were all assembled to make fundamental readjustments to the worldview and mindsets of the Hindu.'[585] Similarly, the changes made by Sherwood in *The Governess* (1820) in which Mrs Teachum tries to enlighten the girls and 'make fundamental changes' to their understanding of the sinful world and of their sinful self is also an outcome of the evangelical influence on Sherwood from India. It is not only Mrs Teachum's instructions on fairy tales that outline the

[583] Ibid, p. 116.
[584] Ashok Malhotra, 'Attempting to Transform the Mental Landscape of the Indian 'Heathen' in Mary Sherwood's *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818), *Literature & Theology*, 32 (2018), pp. 272.
[585] Ibid, p. 285.

importance of the Bible in the text but also certain structural changes in Miss Jenny's biography that further advance this perspective.

I choose the character of Miss Jenny for a critical analysis over the rest of the girls because she is the eldest in the academy and acts as a secondary guide to the other girls. Her actions are wilfully followed by others. In examining Miss Jenny, therefore, the origin of misguidance, or as Dr Johnson calls, the 'difference of instruction' can be found.[586] An autobiographical element similar to Sherwood's own life is visible in Jenny's mother who after losing her husband and four children clings to faith and tries to educate her only son and daughter through the Bible. Jenny says, 'She still beheld her departed children, with the eye of faith, existing in a state of perfect happiness, through the imputed righteousness of that adorable Saviour.'[587] Her mother's method of educating her children only through the Bible hampers the intellectual development of Jenny to the extent that she is unable to learn or understand anything that does not have a religious reference to it. Furthermore, she starts inculcating similar beliefs in her companions. In order to make Miss Sukey realize her mistake in the fight over an apple she says,

> My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God and to serve him, without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer.[588]

Miss Jenny demotivates Miss Sukey by saying that without prayers she will always be incapable of doing anything. Being the eldest among the girls in the academy Jenny acts as a secondary supervisor and in a friendly manner tries to bring everyone to a realization of their faults. For this she relies heavily on the Bible because it has been the way of her own upbringing. The everyday justifications given by her own mother when she fought with her

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[586] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World,* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 278.
[587] Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. 32.
[588] Ibid, p. 30.

brother, after she lost her cat, after she fought for an apple and after every instance when she felt sad were based only on seeking repentance from God. How these instances and the religious remedies provided by her mother affected Jenny's childhood are explained below.

Miss Jenny's mother's inclination towards God and religion, as Sherwood presents in *The Governess* (1820), envelops her duty as a mother to educate both her children equally and in all ways possible; rather she only sends her son to a school and teaches the Bible to her daughter at home. From the accounts given by Miss Jenny it becomes clear that her mother is superstitious, orthodox and insensitive, or in the words of Rachael Hewitt, full of 'superstition and bigotry and hypocrisy'.[589] When Miss Jenny, less than six years of age, childishly fought with her brother who was twelve months her elder her mother would compare their fights with the fight between Abel and Cain in the Bible. She would say, 'An offence, the same in kind, though less in degree, with that of the first murderer, who killed his brother.'[590] The comparison drawn by Jenny's mother does not fit this circumstance firstly because Cain had malignant feelings towards Abel and secondly because Cain killed Abel in his adulthood, in ample understanding of his selfish desires and in full consciousness of his actions. On the other hand the fights between Jenny and her brother begin and end everyday over issues they would not even recall the following day. The superstitious nature of Miss Jenny's mother is parallel to Mrs Sherwood's omniscient narrator in the novel who says, 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.' (Gen 6:5)[591] The words of the

[589] Rachael Hewitt criticizes Hannah More and her ideas on education of children which influenced future writers such as Sherwood to a great extent. She writes, 'More's works were calculated to fill the minds of the uneducated with superstition and bigotry and hypocrisy' and 'unless the mass of the people be trained to humanity, no place or person can be fully secure from the effects of popular fury'. Here, superstition refers to Gospel education and humanity refers to practical education. *A Revolution of Feeling,* (Granta Publications: London, 2018), p. 205.
[590] Sherwood, *The Governess*, p. 42.
[591] Ibid, p. 20.

omniscient narrator which can be equally attributed to Sherwood tries to inform the reader about the sinful nature of humans which can be corrected only by following the Bible; thus, justifying the Evangelical nature of *The Governess* (1820) by Mary Martha Sherwood.

Another example of the overtly religious character of Jenny's mother, in accordance with the changes made by Sherwood, is visible when she asks Jenny to reconcile with her brother after the fight over an apple. The following example also helps us in understanding the patriarchal nature of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century and how boys were preferred over girls to receive education.[592] Although Jenny and her brother act in the same manner of 'stubbornness and pride' after their fight over an apple her mother's words directed her thoughts otherwise.[593] She says to Jenny that 'I am ashamed of your folly, as well as your wickedness, in thus contending with your brother!'[594] Irrespective of Jenny and her brother having a mutual will for reconciliation, their mother, restricted by favouritism, asks only Jenny to apologize for her mistake and to reconcile with her brother. In grief of her lost children she does not want her only son to go through any trouble irrespective of it being as trifle as the situation mentioned here. She continues this approach with Jenny and at a later stage when Jenny loses her cat she says,

> If you give way to this melancholy, how will you be able to please and amuse your brother, when he comes home for the holidays? That *brother* […] I have endeavoured to educate in such a manner as to fit him for becoming your guide and protector.[595]

[592] Sherwood wrote *The Governess* in 1820 which makes it clear that Miss Jenny is a nineteenth-century girl. However, the eighteenth century in the lines above refers to Miss Jenny's mother who was born in that century. Jenny's mother lived in the patriarchal traditions of the eighteenth century as a result of which she provides a school education to her son and not to her daughter both of whom are born in the nineteenth century.
[593] Sherwood, *The Governess*, p. 35.
[594] Ibid, p. 44.
[595] Ibid, p. 49.

A proper example of a patriarchal society is provided here. After the death of her husband it should have been the responsibility of Jenny's mother to take care of both her children in the same way, instead she preferred one above the other. Jenny's role in her home was limited to taking care of her brother's preferences, following her mother's instructions and disregarding any feelings that arose inside her apart from her love for God. She was subjected to this life ever since her childhood and her mind refused to accept anything apart from religious preaching to the extent that she left a large school which provided no religious education and entered Mrs Teachum's academy.[596] Furthermore, Jenny's mother never forgets to add a verse from the Bible in her instructions to Jenny in 1820 which forms the core difference between the two versions of *The Governess.* After the fight with her brother in 1749 she calmly instructs Jenny and explains to her that it is necessary for her to acknowledge her mistake and to understand her folly whereas in the 1820 version she asks Jenny to 'seek assistance from on high' and to ask forgiveness from God for her evil actions.[597] She then goes on to pray herself: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'[598] (Luke 23.34)

Another example contrary to Fielding's version of *The Governess* (1749) visible in Sherwood's version (1820) is the academic progress of Miss Jenny. When compared with herself in the 1749 version Jenny now interprets the stories and their morals in accordance with the Bible. As to her previous self in 1749 where she was told by Mrs Teachum to focus on the characteristics of the characters in the story she is now advised by Mrs Teachum (1820) to look for reasons in the Bible. After reading the story of 'The History of Albert De la Hauteville' to the girls she says that 'From this story, my dear companions, you see the

[596] Jenny explains how she felt uneasy and 'became very unhappy' when she was sent to a school where she had 'no opportunity of receiving religious instruction.' Ibid, p. 42.
[597] Ibid, p. 36.
[598] Ibid.

power and goodness of God in bringing this sinful young man to the knowledge of himself and of his gracious Saviour.'[599] Jenny proclaims here that Albert achieves salvation through faith in the gracious and the powerful God but in 1749, after the first fairy tale of the Cruel Giant Barbarico and the Good Benefico, she advises the girls to remember that 'Benefico's happiness arose from his Goodness. He had less strength, and less riches […] and yet by the good use he made of what he possessed, you see how he turned all things to his advantage.'[600] Thus, there is a huge change in the thinking and perceiving methods of Jenny Peace following the instructions of Mrs Teachum as she derives a similar conclusion from 'The History of Miss Fanny' in the 1820 version of the novel.[601] Though not physically present but Mrs Teachum in both the versions of *The Governess* plays a crucial role in shaping the behaviour of the girls in her academy, something disagreed by Mika Suzuki and which was discussed in detail in chapter one of this thesis.[602]

Sunday is the Lord's Day and is given due importance by both Fielding and Sherwood in their respective versions of the novel but not without some differences. In 1749 the girls get up and get dressed to visit the church. The ultimate instruction of Mrs Teachum for the girls is to behave in a decent manner both inside and outside the church and that is that for the

[599] Ibid, p. 135; The story is about the reign of Louis 14th of France and describes the fight between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholic Church in Paris was worried about the rising influence of the Waldenses, a group of people that believed in Jesus Christ alone. In order to find evidence of their treasonable motives against the 'king and the Roman Catholic doctrines' Albert Hauteville is sent as a spy amidst them. He goes to the valleys of Piedmont, the home of the Waldenses, and spends each night in a different home under the disguise of a traveller telling everyone that he followed their own religion. In order to extract information he starts political discourses but fails to get a satisfactory reply. One day lightning struck him on a mountain top and he was brought to a pastor's house. His evil motives were now in the open because in his sleep he spoke many words against God which clarified that he was not one of the Waldenses. The pastor asked him to repent for his mistake and Albert Hauteville soon realized the false principles he was educated in. He converted to the religion of the Waldenses and renounced the Catholic religion upon his return to Paris. His last days were spent in prison because of his conversion. Ibid, pp. 109-126.

[600] Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 43.

[601] She says to the girls that 'Why, my dear, we do as you say, naturally love ourselves, and seek to promote our own pleasure at the expense of everyone else: but we are taught by the Holy Spirit of God' that many things which proceed out of the heart of the natural man are grossly wicked, and that the heart itself must be changed before we can enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Sherwood, *The Governess*, p. 161.

[602] Mika Suzuki, 'The Little Female Academy and The Governess', *Women's Writing*, 1 (1994), pp. 325-39.

readers of Sarah Fielding. In Sherwood's version, on the other hand, we are given a more expressive account of the day. Sherwood writes that on Sunday, the third day in the novel, the little party woke up early because they 'had already learned from Mrs Teachum and Miss Jenny Peace to love the Lord's Day more than any other, and to consider it as a day of sacred rejoicing.'[603] Furthermore, they are to read nothing apart from the Bible 'for Mrs Teachum had expressed her desire that no other but the book of God should be studied on the Lord's – day'.[604] Along-with the emphasis on reading nothing but the Bible Sherwood introduces a structural change, too, in her version of *The Governess* (1820) from Fielding's. Fielding's version has one Sunday in the entire novel whereas Sherwood incorporates two Sundays in her version of the novel. This change adds to our understanding that Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) is more inclined towards a religious education and a religious upbringing of children and that it portrays the prevalent situation regarding education, especially of girls, in early nineteenth-century England.

From the above mentioned differences between the two versions of *The Governess* it is clear that Mrs Teachum works endlessly in her methods of effective teaching in order to enable her girls to lead a successful life. Sarah Fielding and Mary Martha Sherwood, irrespective of working towards a common goal, adopt separate methods of instruction in their respective novels that primarily divide the two. However, what was correct for one (Fielding) was not correct for the other (Sherwood) and thus learning through fairy tales was not seen as a proper mode of education by the Evangelists. They changed this process and brought a new educational curriculum that focussed on learning history and Scriptures. Evangelists such as Sarah Trimmer, Hannah More and Mrs Barbauld with this new curriculum challenged the beliefs of their predecessors such as Mary Wortley Montagu,

[603] Sherwood, *The Governess*, p. 114.
[604] Ibid.

Maria Edgeworth and Dr Johnson.[605] A change in the mode of education from analysing circumstances in the early eighteenth century to not sinning in the early nineteenth century is visible along-with a bend in the society towards religion. This is also the point where *The Governess* of Sarah Fielding and that of Mary Martha Sherwood differ from each other.

CONCLUSION

The end of the eighteenth century witnessed the emergence of Evangelicals that placed a new emphasis on redemption through faith in Christ.[606] They also invoked a change in the education system by replacing 'childish' books with historical and 'relevant' books that sought to teach children to become responsible adults, something that fairy tales, according to them, could never accomplish. The earlier Socinianists were replaced by Methodists who focussed more on help through 'charity'.[607] As a result, missionaries of the Church of England built various orphanages, Sunday Schools and Charity Schools in countries that included Africa and India.[608] Amidst this religious fervour children were at first ignored but became the central focus of all adults during the latter half of the century. This was due to the growing battle regarding the control of educational institutions between the state and the

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[605] Sylvia Harcstark Myers in her discussion on the Bluestocking circle explains how Hester Chapone was praised for her emphasis on religion for the development of the human mind whereas Sarah Trimmer demanded that the Bible should be taught in schools in order to develop faith. She writes, 'Hester Chapone, with her belief in the fortitude of human mind, was praised rather for her religious turn at one time, while Trimmer, nevertheless, found Chapone's directions defective, as they do not tend to establish the young lady's *Faith* upon decided and steady principles.' *The Bluestocking Circle: women, friendship, and the life of the mind in eighteenth-century England,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 231; Roy Porter, on the other hand, explains how the earlier thinkers separated religion and intellectual study and writes, 'Dr Johnson denied that any child was better than another, but by difference of instruction.' *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World,* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 278.

[606] Michael Alan Behrens explains how 'eighteenth-century novelists repeatedly struggled with how to present a fictional character embodying Christian principles by High and Low church Anglicans as well as Dissenters was often hotly disputed.' 'Sarah Fielding, Benevolent Heroism, and the "True Christian Philosophy"', *Studies in English Literature*, 58 (2018), pp. 633-51.

[607] Mrs Sherwood in her autobiography explains, 'Methodists- that is close followers of the Thirty-Nine Articles; whilst the chaplains on the establishment before […] were unhappily believed to be have been inclined to Socianianism.' Sophia Kelly, *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood*, p. 332.

[608] James Lawrence writes, 'Denominational rivalries were fierce and were imported into India: when, in 1815, the church of Scotland began building a church in Bombay, there was a prolonged and vinegary row over whether or not it should have a steeple.' *Raj: The Making of British India*, (London: Abacus, 1998), p. 225.

Church. In order to have firm supporters for future it was necessary to have firm believers at present and the number of children accounted for more than one third of the total population of England. The mission to change the education system began which further increased the tension between the state and the Church to assume control.[609]

The education of children became a hot topic among the eighteenth-century thinkers and various educational theories emerged. Among men the theories of John Locke, Rousseau, Dr Johnson, Richard Edgeworth and others became famous whereas among women the theories of Sarah Fielding, Catharine Macaulay, Mary Wollstonecraft, Hannah More, Sarah Trimmer and others received recognition. Within the ranks of women educationalists in the eighteenth century emerged Mary Martha Sherwood. Unlike Sarah Fielding Sherwood received education alongside her brother and had the choice of choosing her desired career, but she was heavily influenced by the emerging religious beliefs and instructions of Evangelicalism. Sherwood's biographer M. Nancy Cutt explores the influence of Evangelicalism and Hannah More on her and writes that 'from the age of twenty-one, she was swept into the stream of rapidly changing religious thought and belief' and along-with 'her younger sister Lucy turned to Sunday School work on the lines laid down by Hannah More.'[610] After witnessing several deaths in her family, starting with the death of her father in 1796 and ending with the death of her husband in 1849, she let go of her religious self towards the end of her career. Even Cutt observes that Mrs Sherwood's evangelical faith weakened in the 1830s and 'in her writings after 1835, entertainment takes precedence over religion. A number of pleasant tales, novels, or romances for the young.'[611] According to

[609]. Dinah Birch explains that changes in the social sphere were brought in by the Utilitarian Movement and the Evangelical Movement. The believers of different sects of the society were in conflict with each other and 'Educational practices continued to be deeply divided along lines of class, gender, and religion.' *Education*, (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 5.
[610] Nancy Cutt, *Mrs Sherwood and Her Books for Children,* p. 2.
[611] Ibid, p. 87.

Rachael Hewitt and Nancy Cutt, Sherwood understood that faith separated believers from non-believers and that treating everyone equally brought a person closer to God.[612] True charity resided in the heart and not in the mind. After all, writes Nancy Cutt, 'Unlike Hannah More and Mrs Trimmer, she was at heart a Romantic; being also a novelist, had at her fingertips the fictional elements of sentiments and romance.'[613] This is further expressed by Sherwood in her autobiography where she narrates how she ran to the woods at the age of thirteen and enjoyed the peace and serenity around her. She despised being in a room full of people and being a countryside girl disliked the streets of Kidderminster.

The way Mrs Sherwood describes the manner in which she lived her childhood, having only her sister for a companion, running off to the woods after her mother's lessons, disliking the dirty and monotonous city life of Kidderminster contradict not only her zeal for Evangelical faith but also some of the educational principles established by her in *The Governess* (1820) as an author. As is explained earlier Sherwood's everyday escapades into the deep forests of Stanford immediately after her Bible lessons justifies, partially if not wholly, her disinterest as a child in learning the concepts of sin and salvation. However, in *The Governess* (1820) written after her meeting with Hannah More in England and with Mr Parson in India she advocates for a religious upbringing of children at homes and at schools.[614] She focuses mainly on teaching the Bible to children in *The Governess* (1820) and opposes the study of fairy tales, plays and novels because, according to her, they were un-religious; however, in her autobiography she seems happy as she describes how she 'had some spare corners in her brain for the romances […] and sundry other conceits.'[615] These

[612] See footnote 589 for Hewitt's comments on Hannah More's evangelical works and how they reflect superstition and bigotry.
[613] Nancy Cutt, *Mrs Sherwood and Her Books for Children,* p. 37.
[614] Sherwood met More in 1799 (in Pulteney Street, Bath) when along-with her brother Marten she was invited by 'the excellent Mrs More herself'. Kelly, *The Life,* p. 206.
[615] Ibid, p. 54.

contradictions help us in understanding that the influence of people around her such as that of Mr Parson and of Hannah More, who entered her life at a time when she was at the weakest (coping with the deaths of her father and children), forced her into 'faith' and 'salvation through prayers' just to increase their own supporters for the Church.[616]

Under the influence of Mr Martyn Mrs Sherwood developed a racial distinction towards children. She aimed at helping 'only white girls' or the children of other English officers by building orphanages inside the army cantonment area in India. Mrs Sherwood describes the motive of Mr Martyn and says, 'It was his opinion that if Hindoos could be persuaded that all nations are made of one blood […] that it would be a means of breaking down, or at-least of loosening, that wall of separation which they have set up between themselves and all other people.'[617] The point to be noted is that it was solely Mr Martyn's opinion of the Indian people and their religious beliefs. He intended, as Sherwood writes, to 'persuade' the Hindoos rather than understand and accept beliefs other than his own, and to teach Mrs Sherwood to adopt similar beliefs as his own. Thus, Sherwood, writes Cutt, 'restricted by family responsibilities and having any contact with educated or high-caste Hindus, she drew her conclusions from hearsay and what she saw about her.'[618] Her only sources were the servants and their talks and all her decisions were based on incomplete or wrong information which again points towards the fact that her faith in Evangelicalism started to weaken in the final years of her life as mentioned earlier by Cutt and Hewitt.

If Mrs Sherwood in her childhood was unable to comprehend the morals of Scriptures into her ways of life, how then could the girls at the academy in *The Governess* (1820) be expected to do so? Mrs Sherwood clearly understood the appropriate method of teaching

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[616] See section on Rev Parson discussed earlier in this chapter. Also, refer to footnote 572.
[617] Kelly, *The Life of Mrs Sherwood*, p. 336.
[618] Nancy Cutt, *Mrs Sherwood and Her Books for Children,* p. 20

children when she saw Mr Martyn communicating with her daughter Annie during her stay in India. She writes in her autobiography,

> What could have been more beautiful than to see the senior wrangler and the almost infant Annie thus conversing together, whilst the elder seemed to be in no ways conscious of any condescension in bringing down his mind to the level of the child's?

These lines also provide the answer to the question of the relevance of fairy tales in the education of children. A child is incapable of understanding the complexities of life depicted in scriptures. His world until adulthood revolves around objects created from imagination. Hence, it is very necessary for an adult to stoop down without any 'condescension' into that imaginative world of his and make the child learn from the objects inside it by providing important yet simple interpretations. Therefore, fairy tales or plays like any other intellectual book are an important part of a child's education which help him in acquiring knowledge and morals. Mrs Sherwood, highly influenced by the evangelical tide, chose to turn a blind eye towards such methods of education. She wrote in the introduction to her own version that *The Governess* (1749) by Sarah Fielding was famous for its sentimental interest since it presented the lifestyle of their grandmothers and great-grandmothers.[619] Its importance and mistakes encouraged Sherwood's parents who asked her to revise it. Although she adopted the names of the characters and the framework of the school story, Sherwood virtually followed More's example in burying the original and replacing it with her own version.

When Mrs Teachum in 1820 recites any verse from Bible she fails to understand that such words are useless to children because their minds are not accustomed to differentiating between the results of their actions as worthy or unworthy. Even the Bible, which is often quoted by Sherwood in her autobiography and by Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1820),

[619] Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. iii.

asks to simplify difficult language for a better understanding; 'To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice and judgement, and equity; to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.'[620] (Proverbs 1.3-4) Therefore, it is very important to break down or interpret difficult language for the children to understand it in a much better and simpler way and that it is not necessary to disregard the reading of fairy tales for delivering moral lessons. For example, Proverb 27.17 states that 'Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.'[621] Now, this statement is difficult for children below ten years of age, or as Catharine Macaulay argues in *Letters on Education* (1791) below twenty years of age, to interpret and understand its moral. How then do we expect them to understand other teachings or lessons in the Bible without providing them any simplified interpretations or without the development of their own interpretative skills which require much practice and time? Hence, children can be taught Biblical lessons but in a manner that is simplified and one that is not directly dependent on verses from the Bible as is done by Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum in 1749. For example, in the fairy tale of 'The Princess Hebe' in Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) the ultimate moral to be gained was to obey our parents. The same moral is also mentioned in Bible as: 'My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.'[622] (Proverb 1:8-9) This moral is readily understood by the girls in 1749 after they hear the fairy tale because of their interest in the story, in the fate of its characters and more importantly through the critical interpretation provided by Mrs Teachum in the end. Such representation of morals via fairy tales, then, will have a long lasting effect on the girls for they learn it from interest and not from a necessary obligation as directed by Sherwood's Mrs Teachum in 1820.

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[620] *The Holy Bible.* King James Version, (US: Random House Publishing Group, September 1991), p. 585.
[621] Ibid, p. 604.
[622] Ibid, p. 585.

CONCLUSION

I.

What is a proper method to educate girls? How must that method be used? Who can employ such a method? The study of Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749), Hannah More's *Strictures* (1799) and Mary Martha Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) help in understanding these female authors' answers to these three major questions about the education of girls from 1749-1820.

The educational practice of critical interpretation which binds the three primary writers in this thesis helps us in understanding an important aspect of the ideas that informed the education of women in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Mika Suzuki points out that Fielding's *The Governess* (1749) 'reflects Enlightenment's optimistic belief in the possibilities of instruction and human reason', but, as this thesis shows, Fielding, More and Sherwood believe that it is also necessary to examine the mode of instruction that helps in the development of human reason. This topic is less studied and even less examined when compared with the amount of research available on other popular themes such as subjugation or economic freedom of women in the eighteenth century. When Jane Rendall, who explores the political, the social and particularly the religious developments in England, writes that 'early nineteenth-century women's philanthropy has generally been interpreted in terms of expanding evangelical commitment' we are reminded of Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood and how in their works evangelical ideas reign supreme.[623] However, Rendall also writes that 'other interpretations are possible'; accordingly this thesis presents More's and Sherwood's emphasis on a unique method of teaching children, a method which has been

[623] Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Enlightenment in Britain c.1690-1800', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 9-32, p. 26.

overlooked by critics who primarily focussed on Evangelicalism and Colonialism in the works of these writers.[624]

Alongside identifying eighteenth-century female educationalists' emphasis on critical interpretation for the education of women, this thesis also explains how these women writers differed in the application of this educational practice in their respective works. Sarah Fielding aims at the intellectual development of students by teaching them to critically interpret every book they read. In *The Governess* (1749) Fielding incorporates three fairy tales, a dramatic play and a fable, and through Mrs Teachum critically interprets them for moral lessons. However, before interpreting she warns her 'young readers' that these forms of literature are not suitable sources for the education of a child but (and this is what separates Fielding from Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood) she allows their perusal with a strict instruction to the students that they must control their imagination and focus only on critically interpreting the story for moral lessons. In doing so Fielding's Mrs Teachum exemplifies Plato's philosopher and Locke's ideal educator, both of whom lay emphasis on directing a child 'by what amuses their mind' rather than teaching them by force.[625] On the other hand, Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood aim at children's moral development by teaching them to critically interpret only the Bible. More outlines a three-step interpretation model of segregation, combination and reflection in *Strictures* (1799) in order to teach students how to interpret the Bible. Her emphasis on their salvation rather than on their intellectual development reflects the Evangelical influence on the author. The same influence motivates Sherwood in 1820 to re-write Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). Sherwood's *The Governess* (1820) presents a completely different Mrs Teachum who not only rejects the study of fairy tales (rather than interpreting them) but also expresses

[624] Ibid.
[625] See footnote 231 in chapter one.

disappointment at the depravity of her students' irreligious hearts. Sherwood's emphasis on interpretation (or learning to interpret the Bible) is brought to light when Mrs Teachum, on every available opportunity, urges her students to learn 'the doctrine of the depravity of human nature, the need of a Saviour, and many other important truths taught in Scriptures.'[626] Therefore, this thesis has shown how Sarah Fielding, Hannah More and Mary Martha Sherwood are united in their emphasis on critical interpretation as the ideal method of educating children, but divided on the importance of teaching the Bible (or any religious book) to students. This brings us to the most important finding of this thesis which describes the definition, according to the three authors, of an ideal educator who understands and thus employs this educational practice.

Students (children) form only one half of the educational equation. They are at the receiving end of this whole process. The teachers form the other half, and the three selected authors put an equal emphasis on the importance of an ideal educator without whom this entire educational practice ceases to exist. This is an important finding of this thesis because the fictional representation of schoolmistresses of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century is an understudied topic, especially when we compare it with the number of studies done on fictional representation of schoolmasters from the same time period. The following description of Mrs Teachum's character by Sarah Fielding helps us in understanding how she was kind, commanding, authoritative, gentle, and dignified at the same time, making her the ideal governess whose 'principal aim was to improve' female children's 'minds in all useful knowledge'.[627]

> She had a lively and commanding eye, insomuch that she naturally created an we in all her little scholars […] Her temper was so extremely calm and good, that though she never omitted reprehending, and that pretty severely, any girl that was guilty

[626] Sherwood, *The Governess,* p. 88.
[627] Sarah Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 2.

> of the smallest fault proceeding from an evil disposition; yet for no cause whatsoever was she provoked to be in a passion; but she kept up such a dignity and authority, by her steady behaviour, that the girls greatly feared to incur her displeasure by disobeying her commands; and were equally pleased with her approbation, when they had done anything worthy her commendation.[628]

Fielding explains that Mrs Teachum is strict yet gentle with her students. The girls at her academy fear disobeying her instructions yet eagerly compete with each other in a friendly manner to receive her approbation.[629] Mrs Teachum's academy 'was always mentioned throughout the country' on account of its governess's teaching methods which not only freed the minds of young girls from 'foolish anxieties about trifles' but also helped them in employing their minds towards their own improvement.[630] Thus, the fictional character of Mrs Teachum created by Sarah Fielding is representative of the ideal educator that the eighteenth-century educational institutions for girls, according to Fielding, needed.

Hannah More's ideal educator, on the other hand, has completely different standards for the education of girls. More writes in *Strictures* that 'if I were asked what quality is most important in an instructor of youth, I should not hesitate to reply',

> Such a strong impression of the corruption of our nature, as should insure a disposition to counteract it; together with such a deep view and thorough knowledge of the human heart, as should be necessary for developing and controlling its most secret and complicated workings.[631]

The most important characteristic of an ideal educator, according to More, is that he must work towards rectifying children's 'corrupt nature and evil dispositions'.[632] This Calvinistic view held by More regarding children lay the foundations of her Sunday Schools in which she

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[628] Ibid, p. 3.
[629] An example of this is seen when Mrs Teachum takes them out for a walk to the dairy house and the omniscient narrator says that 'this good gentlewoman, so far from laying them under a restraint by her presence, encouraged them to run in the fields, and to gather flowers; which they did, each miss trying to get the best to present to her governess.' Ibid, p. 66.
[630] Ibid, p. 138.
[631] Hannah More, *Strictures,* Vol. 1, p. 64.
[632] Ibid.

taught the Bible. Teachers must consider religion to be the most important part of their instruction as a result of which it must be the first thing children hear in the morning 'before they are tired with their other studies'.[633] Thus, according to More, an ideal educator is one who inculcates Christian principles in girls and uses the Bible as his main source for delivering instructions. Furthermore, this thesis presents how Mary Martha Sherwood's Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* (1820), under the similar light of Evangelical influence, exemplifies More's ideal educator which helps us in understanding the changes brought by Evangelicalism in the fictional representation of schoolmistresses in early nineteenth-century women's academies.

It is interesting to note that, unlike Fielding, Sherwood provides no account of the character of Mrs Teachum apart from the Christian education she received from her own husband which made her a truly 'pious' woman.[634] Furthermore, Sarah Fielding refers to Mrs Teachum's academy as a school whereas Sherwood refers to it as 'a seminary for the education of a few young ladies.'[635] The Evangelical character of Mrs Teachum is explored in detail in chapter three of this thesis but Sherwood's detailed description of the academy ('the place') over that of Mrs Teachum in the introduction to her version of *The Governess* (1820) speaks a lot about the author's emphasis on seminaries for girls or educational establishments that impart a religious education. In re-writing *The Governess* (1749) as an evangelical text Sherwood had to change not only the governess but also the academy which justifies her detailed description of the academy as a seminary in the introduction. Therefore, this thesis presents how different female educationalists from the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century lay emphasis on the common educational method of teaching female children to

[633] Ibid, p. 252.
[634] Fielding describes her as a sensible woman but Sherwood describes her as a pious woman. Sherwood, *The Governess*, p. 2.
[635] Ibid, p. 4.

critically interpret books for an overall development. A critical exploration of their respective works also help us in understanding their emphasis on an ideal educator which becomes an important finding of this thesis when viewed in the broader aspect of fictional representation of schoolmistresses in the literary works of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

II.

This thesis shows how the educational practice of critical interpretation was an integral part in the theorization of children's education in England in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, and establishes its importance in understanding the intellectual development of female children. However, as shown in the previous section of this conclusion, if we shift the focus from the student to the teacher we will find that all thinkers, philosophers or educationalists mentioned in this thesis put an equal emphasis on the importance of an ideal educator.[636] According to them, the educational practice of teaching students to critically interpret books only becomes relevant after an educator understands its importance and works towards improving his students' interpretative skills. This creates an opportunity for future researchers to explore this important aspect which is directly related to the philosophy of critical interpretation and which I introduce in brief in this conclusion. There are two reasons for introducing this topic here. Firstly, it helps us in understanding the history of the representation of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses in eighteenth and nineteenth-century England and secondly, it helps in establishing how the legacy of this educational practice is carried forward by writers of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Since interpretation of fairy tales and their importance in educating children is central to this thesis I present here in brief how Charles Dickens in the nineteenth century and

[636] In the introduction to this thesis, too, I mention that in the works of earlier thinkers such as Plato, Spinoza and Locke the importance of an ideal educator runs parallel to the importance of teaching critical interpretation to children.

Frances Hodgson Burnett in the twentieth century lay emphasis on the importance of fairy tales and an ideal educator who focuses on the development of students' interpretative skills. I look particularly at Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1838) and *David Copperfield* (1850), and Frances Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1905).

Key to my understanding the role of fancy in education is the interpretive work carried out by instructors such as Mrs Teachum in *The Governess*, Mr Losberne and the white headed man in *Oliver Twist*, Miss Betsy Trotwood and Doctor Strong in *David Copperfield*. These instructors guide the development of the child characters and help us in understanding how fancy assists in educating a child. Furthermore, all these instructors follow a similar teaching method. For example, Mrs Teachum in *The Governess* initially allows girls to freely interpret fairy tales, the white headed man provides instructions and leaves Oliver alone to practice and Miss Betsy Trotwood in *David Copperfield* allows David to explore his career options for a month. The common educational method of first allowing students to freely make their own observations explains why these individuals stand out from the rest and yet do not occupy the centre stage in the novels because 'after being inspired to change, they inspire others to change'.[637] The following paragraphs briefly elaborate on the characteristics of these ideal educators and how they lay emphasis on critical interpretation.

When Mr Brownlow, Mr Losberne and Rose help Oliver in moving away from the 'confounded London' to the serene countryside in order to provide him not only the 'peace of mind and soft tranquillity' but also a proper education we witness Dickens' emphasis on interpretation and an ideal educator.[638]

> The dew seemed to sparkle more brightly on the green leaves, the air to rustle among them with a sweeter music, and the sky itself to look more blue and bright. Such is the influence which the condition of our own thoughts exercises even over the

[637] Chloe Chit-Ning Li, 'De-characterization in *The Secret Garden', The Explicator*, 74 (2016), pp. 66-8.
[638] Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist,* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 1992), p. 202.

> appearance of external objects. Men who look on nature, and their fellow-men, and cry that all is dark and gloomy, are in the right; but the sombre colours are reflections from their own jaundiced eyes and hearts. The real hues are delicate, and need a clearer vision.[639]

In these lines Dickens explains how beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder which helps us in understanding that every individual interprets beauty differently. However, it is also to be noted that, according to Dickens, the 'dark and gloomy' interpretation of any object is the 'reflection from' people's 'own jaundiced eyes and hearts' and that the object in itself has no such characteristics. Thus, what matters is how we interpret anything which takes us back to the ideals of Sarah Fielding and Mary Martha Sherwood. Fielding's Mrs Teachum interprets fairy tales whereas Sherwood's Mrs Teachum rejects their study altogether. Dickens, through his emphasis on proper interpretation which can make the dew sparkle more brightly or 'the sky to look more blue and bright', follows Fielding's pedagogical methods and presents how Oliver Twist was saved by the people mentioned above, who put him in a better environment and educated him in the proper way. Dickens' emphasis on the importance of an ideal educator, too, is seen in this 'new existence' of Oliver when he writes,

> Every morning he went to a white headed old gentleman who lived near the little Church, who taught him to read better, and to write; and spoke so kindly, and took such pains, that Oliver could never try enough to please him. Then he would walk with Mrs Maylie and Rose, and hear them talk of books […] and listen whilst the young lady read […] Then he had his own lessons for the next day to prepare, and at this he would work hard.[640]

The educational method of the white headed man helped Oliver progress at a rate which even 'surprised himself' although it should not be overlooked that 'he applied himself, with redoubled assiduity, to the instructions.'[641] The evening walks with Mrs Maylie and Rose remind us of the evening walks of Mrs Teachum who took her students to a farm or a garden

[639] Ibid, p. 217.
[640] Ibid, p. 203.
[641] Ibid, p. 218.

in order to rejuvenate their minds and to improve their physical health at the same time. Thus, a similarity between the importance of critical interpretation and the importance of an ideal educator who uses ideal educational methods is visible in the works of Sarah Fielding from the eighteenth century and Charles Dickens from the nineteenth. These similarities expand and become clearer in *David Copperfield* when Dickens mentions that David was unable to understand geography, mathematics or grammar but loved works of fiction, especially fairy tales.

David Copperfield's joy knows no bounds on finding his father's library and the set of books in it. He says,

> From that blessed little room, *Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphry Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas,* and *Robinson Crusoe,* came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time – they, and the *Arabian Nights,* and the *Tales of the Genii* – and did me no harm; for whatever harm was in some of them was not there for me; *I* knew nothing of it.[642]

There are two important things about the books that are mentioned here. First is the order in which Dickens writes them and second is his emphasis on critical interpretation. Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), *Peregrine Pickle* (1751, 1758) and *Humphry Clinker* (1771) tell the story of their respective protagonists who are rejected by their families, beaten by their fathers and forced to leave their homes. The stories in these books are exactly similar to the story of David Copperfield who is beaten by his step-father and forced to run away from his own home which allows us to understand why David felt 'constant comfort' only in his father's library. Henry Fielding's bildungsroman novel *Tom Jones* (1749) attracted David, who named its hero as the 'harmless creature', for the similarity, according to him, between Tom Jones and himself. Dickens' emphasis on interpretation, too, is clear in the lines above

[642] Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield,* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 1999), p. 51.

not once but twice. Firstly, when David exclaims that 'whatever harm was in some of them was not there for me; *I* knew nothing of it' it makes it clear that there is some harm in reading not only novels but also fairy tales. Dickens, by naming these books along-with *Arabian Nights* and *Tales of the Genii,* warns his readers that the perusal of these books must be followed by critical interpretation. Even David, after escaping from his house and arriving at his aunt's door, says to her that he has been 'taught nothing' and that he desires a decent education.[643] Secondly, Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* (1771) is an epistolary novel which presents to its readers different interpretations of the same events through its different characters. Thus, Dickens' mention of the book in *David Copperfield* indirectly establishes his own emphasis on interpretation.

As mentioned earlier, a critical study of the works of Charles Dickens helps in understanding the history of the representation of schoolmasters in nineteenth-century England. There are two different and completely opposite schools mentioned in *David Copperfield.* One is that of Mr Creakle and the other is that of Dr Strong. David explains that Dr Strong's school was 'different from Mr Creakle's as good is from evil.'[644] Mr Creakle's school was 'carried on by sheer cruelty' where boys learned nothing. The students there were 'as ignorant a set as any schoolboys in existence; they were too much troubled and knocked about to learn.'[645] Mr Creakle's cruelty in running his schools and providing no education to his students is reflective of the attitude of early nineteenth-century schoolmasters. Male teachers resorted to corporal punishments which ranged from lashes on the hand to spending 'much of the time incarcerated in the coal cellar for misbehaviour.'[646] They focused on the importance of being disciplined more than being learned which further helps us in

[643] Ibid, p. 167.
[644] Dickens, *Oliver Twist,* p. 205.
[645] Ibid, p. 84.
[646] William Lovett, born in 1800, writes this about his schooling days in the Dame School. Christopher Hibbert, *The English: A Social History* 1066-1945, p. 449.

understanding how the aristocrats who sponsored public schools intended to solve the spread of pauperism in the country. However, heavy punishments inflicted by teachers aggravated the students to an extent that there were nationwide revolts at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Christopher Hibbert writes,

> In 1793 at Winchester there was a 'Great Rebellion' in which boys fired pistols and threw stones from the tower; in 1797 at Rugby pupils blew up the headmaster's door and had to be read the Riot Act; in 1818 there was another riot at Winchester, this time so serious that it had to be quelled by soldiers with bayonets. There were also disturbances at Harrow in 1808 when senior boys paraded about with banners declaring 'Liberty and Rebellion'.[647]

Yet, irrespective of the violent punishments and a curriculum dominated by the classics, most upper-class children were sent to these public schools. The children of the poor had the Sunday Schools and the Charity Schools to suffice with where although they were safe from learning about the Greeks they still had to face the cane.[648] All this informs us about the education of boys and how Charles Dickens in nineteenth century represented the reality of schools and schoolmasters in his works. An understanding of the education of girls and the representation of schoolmistresses in women's academies is presented in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1905). A brief discussion on this text, as mentioned earlier, helps in understanding its author's emphasis on critical interpretation and the importance of an ideal educator.

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[647] Ibid, pp. 455-56.

[648] See the confession made by a pupil named Bourne in Christopher Hibbert's *The English: A Social History* about his schooldays in one of Robert Raikes' Sunday Schools. He recollects, 'Mr Raikes used always to come to school on Sundays and inquire what the children had learnt and whether they had been 'good boys'. If there had been extra bad boys then he would punish them himself […] An old chair was laid on its two front legs, downwards so, and then the young 'un was put on so, kicking and swearing all the time […] Then Mr Raikes would cane him.' Children were not taught to read and write but to repeatedly speak the catechisms from the Bible. However, the poor children never benefited from this educational method because the teachers did not interpret the meanings of those verses to them. Ibid, p. 452.

Frances Burnett's emphasis on critical interpretation is brought to light when Sara Crewe says, 'It has nothing to do with what you look like, or what you have. It has only to do with what you THINK of, and what you DO.'[649] Sara says this to Ermengarde, another girl at Miss Minchin's seminary, who was always depressed as a result of being fat. Sara is only twelve years old but her remarks and observations reflect the mind of an adult. At another point in the novel a girl named Lavinia accuses her of 'making fairy stories about heaven' and Sara's reply speaks a lot about Burnett's views on interpretation and children studying religious books.[650] Sara says to Lavinia,

> There are much more splendid stories in Revelation. Just look and see! How do you know mine are fairy stories? But I can tell you – with a fine bit of unheavenly temper – you will never find out whether they are or not if you're not kinder to people than you are now.[651]

The most important thing to be noted here is that, according to Sara, the Bible is a collection of stories and not a series of instructions given by God to achieve salvation. Furthermore, when she asks Lavinia to 'look and see' her (the author's) emphasis on critical interpretation of those stories for moral lessons becomes clear. It is also clear from these lines that studying the Bible taught Sara to be kind to people, but what is more important is that Sara focuses on the lesson learnt, and advises the same to Lavinia, rather than on the book she learnt it from. This hints towards Burnett's emphasis on teaching moral values to children without putting any special emphasis on the Bible for their acquisition. Therefore, Frances Burnett, like Sarah Fielding and Catharine Macaulay, puts emphasis on critically interpreting all books for the acquisition of virtues and morals. Her emphasis on the importance of an ideal educator, who

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[649] Frances Burnett, *A Little Princess: Being the Whole Story of Sara Crewe Now Told for the First Time*, (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2017), p. 79.

[650] A detail exploration of *A Little Princess* is not the purpose of this conclusion but Sara Crewe's character provides a good opportunity to draw comparisons with Sarah Fielding's Mrs Teachum on interpretation of fairy tales.

[651] Frances Burnett, *A Little Princess*, p. 65.

focuses on improving children's interpretative skills is indirectly understood through the character of Miss Minchin.

Twelve-year old Sara Crewe is brought to Miss Minchin's seminary to be educated and we are provided a glimpse of the nature of this governess at the very beginning when Sara observes that the academy 'was somehow exactly like Miss Minchin. It was respectable and well furnished, but everything in it was ugly.'[652] Burnett's emphasis on the importance of an ideal educator is understood through the selfish, greedy and uneducated character of Miss Minchin as a governess. The author aims at presenting to its readers the harmful effects of putting young girls under the care of a 'business woman' governess who pays no attention towards their education.[653] Throughout the novel Miss Minchin is presented as a 'very severe and imposing person' who is always 'desirous of concealing' her greed and doing anything in order to admit more and more pupils into her school.[654] Unlike Mrs Teachum, who 'was moderate in her desires' and instead of filling up her school 'was resolved to take no more scholars than she could have an eye to herself', Miss Minchin is preoccupied with receiving money from her students' parents.[655] Furthermore, Miss Minchin even develops a grudge, an undesirable trait in a teacher, against Sara because of her kind and generous nature. However, it is to be kept in mind that Frances Burnett, through Miss Minchin's negative traits, presents the qualities that must not be there in a teacher; qualities that have been outlined as bad and undesirable by earlier women educationalists such as Catharine Macaulay and Hannah More in this thesis. Through Miss Minchin's seminary Frances Burnett also helps us in understanding that women's academies in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century England still lacked not only a proper curriculum but also proper governesses. However, for

[652] Ibid, p. 11.
[653] Ibid, p. 112.
[654] Ibid, p. 28.
[655] Fielding, *The Governess,* p. 1.

the purpose of this conclusion and for understanding how the legacy of this educational practice is carried forward by writers of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, a brief discussion on the works of Charles Dickens and Frances H. Burnett makes it clear that this topic serves as a bridge in connecting the ideas of various prominent writers scattered over centuries on the education of children, especially girls.

III.

Education of girls in the eighteenth century was often restricted to learning good manners and social etiquettes. Girls from 'lower orders' were mainly directed towards learning homemaking skills so that they would take care of their 'little families', whereas for those from the higher orders education merely meant becoming a 'well-rounded' knowledgeable woman who would make a 'better companion to the man she would marry'.[656] However, by the end of the eighteenth century women's education started receiving critical attention from women thinkers and educationalists. Writers such as Maria Edgeworth, Hannah More, Sarah Trimmer, Mary Wollstonecraft and Catharine Macaulay raised some very important issues through their works but critics and historians, also, do not disregard the fact that women's education till 1850 was 'embedded in ideas of social difference'.[657] The foundation of Queen's College in Glasgow in 1842 and of Queen's College in London in 1848 are considered to be a landmark in women's educational history.[658] However, since this thesis explores women's educational history from 1749-1820, the type of education provided to women in academies and in various schools in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century depended much upon social and religious developments. Changes in the social sphere were brought in by the Utilitarian movement and the Evangelical movement but 'educational

[656] Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 33-52, p. 52.
[657] Ibid, p. 36. Also, see footnote 98 for catching a glimpse of the views of these authors on education.
[658] Ibid, p. 51.

practices continued to be deeply divided along lines of class, gender, and religion.'[659] Irrespective of women's education receiving much critical attention from both male and female thinkers towards the end of the eighteenth century, women were only allowed to attend lectures and not take degrees in universities even in the 1870s. Professions remained barred to women and nursing was the closest they got to a professional career.[660] Therefore, although Deborah Simonton argues that nineteenth-century women's education had 'democratizing tendencies' and that it was more useful, history presents a different picture where girls' education practically saw no development from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century.[661]

This thesis serves as a point of entry. The chapters reflect a significant new perspective to the history of women's education in England from 1749-1820 by identifying a common teaching method in the works of selected female writers having contrasting beliefs and circumstances. It is not surprising that the vast amount of studies done on women's education have focussed majorly on the developments with respect to equality in education for both boys and girls, and as Deborah Simonton argues in an earlier paragraph, how democratic it became with time. Another aspect of the history of women's education is

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[659] Jeremy Bentham, the founder of Utilitarianism, lay emphasis on the happiness and well-being of all individuals. Benthamites, thus, aimed towards uplifting the middle class with the help of the upper working class. They proposed monitorial schools for the poor, reforms in secondary education, cheap informative literature and untaxed newspapers for all. According to them, every social class should be educated to perform their respective roles in the society. However, the evangelicals opposed this idea. The secular education desired by the Benthamites, according to the evangelists, raised fears of social and moral dangers in the society. As a result, they aimed at establishing religious codes of behaviour in order to maintain the class differences; Dinah Birch, *Education*, p. 5.

[660] Hannah Barker observes how women served as 'midwives, nurses, wet nurses, and druggists' in a society where all professions were male-dominated. 'Women and Work', *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850,* ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 124-51, p.141; Kennet O. Morgan calls this a 'partial liberation' of women who were now allowed to go outside their homes but still not allowed to fully explore their career options. *The Oxford History of Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 493.

[661] Deborah Simonton, 'Women and Education', p. 52; Christopher Hibbert explains how in Mr Pulman's Academy for girls at Leeds 'Jane Stock and her daughter taught all sorts of Needlework, and Patterns drawn on Cloth or Canvas after the newest Fashion, likewise Paistry, Huswifry, Pickling and Sweet meats.' *The English: A Social History* 1066-1945, p. 454.

critics' engagement with the role of women and religion in society. The arguments presented by Karen Green, Michael Behrens, Earla Wilputte, Penelope Wilson, Mahasweta Baxipatra and Hannah Barker in this thesis make it clear that evangelicalism greatly influenced not only eighteenth-century educational institutions but also women educationalists in England. The recent attention given by these critics to the influence exerted by women on education and reform in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century is an important development. My thesis adds to what is clearly a growing literature and identifies in the works of selected women educationalists a specific curriculum and a learning method for the intellectual development of girls. Women's education when viewed from a perspective which focuses entirely on their scholastic curriculum not only provides a more intimate detail of their literal development but also opens up further avenues of exploring the representation of teacher-student relationship as this thesis shows.

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