A Grand Tour to “The Home Among the Flowers” —The Origins of Child Emigration and Institutionalization Models in Mid-19th Century America and Early 20th Century Britain

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Article

A Grand Tour to "*The Home Among the Flowers*" [1]—The Origins of Child Emigration and Institutionalization Models in Mid-19th Century America and Early 20th Century Britain

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Abstract

This paper explores the origins and diffusion of child emigration and institutionalisation models in mid-19th-century America and early-20th-century Britain through the experiences of two influential philanthropists: Charles Loring Brace and Kingsley Fairbridge. Drawing on Brace's 1850 European "Grand Tour" to Germany and Fairbridge's 1903 journey from Southern Rhodesia to London, it examines how their encounters with reform institutions like Rauhe Haus and the Inner Mission inspired distinct emigration schemes. Brace's American Children's Aid Society initiated "orphan trains," placing children in rural Protestant foster homes based on Christian family values. Conversely, Fairbridge founded farm schools in Australia under the Child Emigration Society, combining agricultural training with imperial settlement. Both schemes reflected a shared idealisation of countryside environments as corrective spaces for urban poverty, yet diverged in motives: Brace's rooted in religious and social reform, and Fairbridge's in colonial population strategy. Through comparative historical analysis, the paper highlights the transatlantic flow of reform ideas and situates child emigration within broader social welfare and imperial networks.

Keywords: child emigration ; institutionalisation; social reform; Transatlantic philanthropy; imperial settlement

Introduction

> *"When you close your eyes on a hot day you may see things that have remained half hidden at the back of your brain. That day I saw a street in the east end of London. It was a street crowded with children* […] *. Children's lives wasting while the Empire cried aloud for men. There were workhouses full orphanages full - and no farmers. 'Farmers – children, farmers – children …' the words ran in my head* […] *. And then I saw it quite clearly: Train the children to be farmers! Not in England. Teach them their farming in the land where they will farm"* (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 158).

This vision struck Kingsley Fairbridge (born in 1885) following his first journey in 1903 from "*the outskirts of the Empire*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 45), that is from his home country of Southern Rhodesia to the British Empire's metropole. On this journey, he had been shocked by the living conditions of the poor that he had encountered in England. He had also noted the large number of destitute children in the streets there. In addition, his journey gave him a chance to study different models of juvenile reform in the metropole. Fairbridge would spend the rest of his life making his vision become reality by setting up the Child Emigration Society (CES) and a farm school in the British Dominion of Australia in 1912, where formerly destitute British children grew up and were trained to become farmers on the (Australian) land.

[1] Brace, 1853, p.91-96

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In the same spirit, in the spring of 1850, the American philanthropist Brace (born in 1826) went on his "grand tour" to Europe (Brace, 1853, pp. 94–95). He had been appalled by the living conditions of the poor in his home country. In Germany, he was by chance introduced into the circle of Johann Heinrich Wichern, who was the leader of the evangelical Inner Mission, which was an evangelical upper- and middle- class movement with the object of bringing the "*practical good works of religion*" back to the people, especially the lower classes (Brace, 1853, p. 30). The Inner Mission also established the "Rauhe Haus" for vagrant children (Nelson, 1980, pp. 122–135),which was an agricultural school in the German countryside. The Children's Aid Society set up by Brace was following the model set by the Inner Mission (Nelson, 1980, pp. 122–135).

This article is a comparison of the long-distance travels and explorations undertaken by Brace and Fairbridge. Furthermore, it also explores the "inner journeys" that these two philanthropists underwent through travelling.

It compares travel within and from two empires (Go, 2011, p. 2), as the two philanthropists undertook their travels respectively from a (former) white settler colony, which was (Southern Rhodesia) or had been (United States) part of the British Empire. Their destination, next to Germany, was in both cases the metropole of the British Empire, more precisely, London.

The present article mainly looks at two points in time: the travels of Brace in 1850 and the travels of Fairbridge in 1903.

The purpose of this paper is to shine a light on how two child migration schemes came into being through the travels of two philanthropists who were inspired by their journeys, so that following their return to their home countries they each set up a child emigration scheme. This article will also look at how features of models of child reform that they encountered during their travels were taken up in their own child emigration schemes.

These two philanthropists have been specifically chosen due to the different settings of child reform which they devised, namely family placements vs. a farm school system/institutionalisation model, which in turn will enhance the article by adding breadth.

This article is in part based on by the writings of Brace, most notably his own travel accounts called "*Home Life in Germany*" (Brace, 1853, p.12) and his biography which was assembled by his daughter based on his letters (Brace, 1894, p.34).

Fairbridge's impressions are conveyed by the poems which he started to write in his mid-teens, in which he expressed his love for his home country, but also a strong imperial zeal.

It will argue that these two actors, as representatives of their respective empires, purposefully utilized their travels to explore models of child emigration overseas, features of which they then implemented in their home countries as a tool of social reform. Hence, the idea of using child emigration as a tool of social reform had a common origin, as both the UK and the US actors were inspired by the same models which they then took to their home countries.

In the American case, child emigration was more like a *"safety valve"* that should be an antidote to overcrowding, immoral ways of living and poverty on the US American east coast. For Brace, a reverend by profession, religion was therefore a major incentive for exploration and travel. In contrast to that, the British case, child emigration to the Dominions was used to consolidate the British position in the various colonies such as Australia, Canada and Rhodesia.

Both emigration schemes have a common defining characteristic in the exaltation of the countryside and rural life, which Brace and Fairbridge both had experienced as children. The solution of child emigration that Brace and Fairbridge devised literally aimed to send the child emigrants "back to their own childhoods."

Finally, it should be mentioned that Brace and Fairbridge, just like many of their wealthy middle class (non-European) companions during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, followed a trend of embarking on a "grand tour" of Europe to not only see the sights, but also to find solutions to the social problems caused by industrialization. Therefore, this article posits that both emigration schemes run by the New York CAS and the British CES were embedded in the wider social (childcare) reform movement at the time.

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Historical Background

In the United States, between 1854 and 1929, children were sent on a large scale from the large overpopulated cities such as New York to farms in the rural countryside using so-called 'orphan trains.' Private philanthropic organizations, for example the New York Children's Aid Society (CAS) founded by Charles Loring Brace in 1853, played a pivotal role in organizing and carrying out this migration scheme. They were in part supported and funded by the states which sent the children. For example, from 1912 onwards, the CAS received a payment especially for placing out and supervision from city of New York.

In Great Britain, between 1869 and 1967, tens of thousands of British children from the metropole were selected for permanent emigration to the British settler colonies. The emigration of British children was supported and partially funded by the British government. Crucial in carrying out this social policy were again private philanthropic societies such as, for example, the CES.

Both Brace and Fairbridge undertook their travels from very similar points of departure. In Brace's letters and Fairbridge's autobiography, in retrospect, they reconstruct a happy childhood in the countryside, where they both enjoyed long hours of leisure time which they later remember fondly. This led both Brace and Fairbridge to consider migrating destitute children to the countryside, where they would experience a childhood just as their own as the ideal solution. Both of them grew up in sheltered middle class families, in the countryside of New England and Rhodesia respectively, followed by an education at elite universities, namely Yale and. Oxford. Therefore, the idealisation of the countryside has its roots in Brace's and Fairbridge's early years.

Charles Loring Brace was born in Litchfield, Connecticut in 1829, to an old, influential and conservative New England family (Langsam, 1961, p. 5). His home in Hartford (where his family moved to when he was a child) was located in the countryside, surrounded by streams and country walks. In his letters, sent from college, which "*glow with memories*," he reconstructs a happy childhood, spent with his father in the outdoors as "*trout fishing became an ingrained habit*". Beyond that he "*loved rambles in the country*" (Brace, 1894, p. 5).

After finishing school, he continued his education in Divine Studies at Yale University, once again in a protected rural environment. Also, during his time at college he continued to enjoy his holidays at home in nature with long days of fishing which, *"filled each summer brimful of enjoyment" (Brace, 1894, p. 18).* His writes to a friend that *"my trouting, my ramblings over mountains and by willow-fringed brooks*" filled him with "*ecstasies over the fresh, green meadows and waving woods and bright flowers and trout streams*" (Brace, 1894, p. 34).

While growing up, Brace was influenced in his religious development by the Congregational minister Horace Bushnell, who propagated the importance of the family environment as the most important factor in child development. He believed that many poor children were not only being corrupted by economic hardship but also by degenerate birth families – and that migrating the children to a good Christian family was the best way to deal with the problem (O'Connor, 2001, p. 94).

Based on his own childhood experiences, Brace devised a child emigration scheme which selected foster families for the children who were to be migrated based on a number of criteria. Importantly, all of them lived in the countryside and nearly all were farmers on their own land or renting a farm (CAS, Sub-Subseries XI.3, Case Files 5633,2465,6369,4734,7572,7792,8091,8171,8642,10137,435, 229 11087, 729, ca.1900-1925, N-YHS). The farms adhered to the model of a "small-family farm" (CAS, Sub-Subseries XI.3, Case Files 5633,2465,6369,4734,7572,7792,8091,8171,8642,10137,435, 229 11087, 729, ca.1900-1925, N-YHS).

Regions where children were placed, were mostly chosen on the basis of religious doctrine, as an area or community had to meet certain standards as a correct moral and religious environment. Religious doctrine decided which foster families in which communities would receive children and would provide wholesome homes for them (Holt, 1992, p. 73). As the migration system of the CAS expanded, the children were migrated to Protestant farms ever further south and west (see Figure 1).

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Kingsley Fairbridge was born to upper middle-class parents of British descent in South Africa in 1885 and moved to Rhodesia in 1897. In his autobiography he remembers the house where he grew up in great detail, with great fondness for the nature surrounding it: *"This house […] was to stand on the highest point in the town – a little rounded kopje (hill) of diorite boulders and red clay, crowned with three fig-trees, some katjiepiering bushes, some marula trees, and a group of queer thorn-bushes that have a very delicate and lovely blossom. The katjiepiering have whitish-green bark, a hardy stunted growth and large white flowers of a powerful and delicious odour. Wild custard-apples grew on the east slope, and in their season bloomed purple and yellow and white orchids, gladioli, laburnums and scarlet-shrubs*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 23).

Fairbridge spent his childhood wandering with his father, who was a surveyor, exploring the wild country between the mountains and the Zambesi, feeding on Ufu and venison by remote campfires (Fairbridge, Kingsley, 1974, p. 4).

From his autobiography we learn that from an early age he enjoyed nature: "*but I enjoyed most my solitary rambles up the hill-side among the* […*flowers or on the white dunes beyond the Sand River where the windblown sea sand cuts one's bare legs like thousands of little knives – I was happy in any bare place beneath the sky, where I could hear the sea, or the wind blowing through the grass*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 6).

He also experienced from an early age how the Empire was built, as he wrote in his autobiography: "*As a lad of thirteen, dressed in knickers and shirt-sleeves, I walked on the outskirts of Empire* […*Fig and thorn and kafir-orange vanished before the axes; villages of grass and canvas sprang to life amidst the virgin veld.* […*And so I went ahead on the tide of progress, wondering and observing and thinking of the thousand homesteads that would some day dot these fields*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 45). Thereby the image of the boy being dressed in typically British clothes "*knickers and shirt-sleeves*" is evocative of his Britishness, but also of his (British) mindset to develop, colonialize and civilize the Empire.

He was educated at the University of Oxford, where he first published on child emigration (Hill, 2007, p. 33). At Oxford he developed many contacts, which proved useful in his later life. During his study of the subject of forestry, he soon realised that it also had implications for imperial agricultural development (Jeffery & Sherington, 2013, p. 21).

Little surprising, the space where "The littlest colonists of the world's greatest Empire" (K. Fairbridge, "Infant Immigrants at Home - Life at the Farm School", The Daily Mail, Newscuttings, 17th June 1914, D296/F2/1, ULSCA). were sent to by the CES during the interwar period were the "shores" of Australia and Canada, and thus the frontiers of the British settler colonies (Osterhammel, 2014, p. 327), where a special form of colonial expansion, namely overseas settlement colonisation was practised (Osterhammel, 2005, p. 17).

From the beginning, it was clear to Fairbridge that *"This Farm School [Pinjarra] was but one unit,"* which should be *"proved and then repeated in every part of the Empire that was hungry for population" (CES, 21st Annual Report, 1929-1930, p.16, D296/D1/1/1, ULSCA).* In the words of the Prince of Wales, *"no one today would […] deny the desirability of extending the system as widely as possible within the Empire*" (CES, 24th Annual Report, 1932-1933, p.1, D296/D1/1/1, ULSCA).

The completed work, as aimed for by Kingsley Fairbridge, would be *"a chain of farm school."(CES, 21st Annual Report, 1929-1930, p.5, D296/D1/1/1, ULSCA).*

After Fairbridge's death, and due to a fund-raising campaign by the Prince of Wales, this was turned into reality, as several new farm schools were opened in the 1930s, the first of these in British Columbia on Vancouver Island, Canada, in late 1935 (Boucher, 2014, p. 140). The year 1938 saw the opening of the Fairbridge farm school in Molong, Australia and Northcote, Australia (No author, "Fairbridge Farm Schools",Newspaper Cutting from The Times, 1938, D296/F1/4, ULSCA). After the Second World War, a further farm school opened in Rhodesia; however, this school was conceptualised differently with respect to the other farm schools, as it targeted children from the British elite, who were trained to take on leadership roles (Hill, 2007, p. 35). In the late 1950s, the last two Fairbridge farm schools, namely Tesca House in Tasmania and Drapers Hall in South Australia were opened (Hill, 2007, p. 23).

The Grand Journey Commences - Departure to the City

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The two visionaries first came into contact with the poorest class of the city when, during their early adulthood and for the first time in their lives, they travelled to the cities of New York and London. They were shocked by the social conditions they found there, and especially by the problem of child poverty. They both constructed the city as a space of poverty and, with that, as a counter world to their idyllic vision of the countryside.

For both of them, these trips would be a seminal moment in their lives, which, from this point onwards, were devoted to improving the situation of impoverished children by migrating them away from the squalid conditions to the idealised conditions in the countryside.

Brace, who, for the first time in his life, was in the city of New York, was confronted with the great poverty there. He was especially aware of certain marginal groups at risk such as children and prostitutes. In a letter to his sister, he describes: "*I think bright. I think, after all, there is a great deal of beauty in winter, especially when there's snow over everything. The sky is uncommonly beautiful this season with us […]. Have you ever noticed the effect produced ´during this season of the year by the afternoon sunlight tingeing a cloud of steam, the most delicate, fading away, not-to-be-looked-at purple color, you ever could see. […]. New York is whirling as usual. You have no idea, what an immense vat of misery and crime and filth much of this great city is! […]. Think of ten thousand children growing up almost sure to be prostitutes and rogues!*" (Brace, 1894, p. 84).

His letters at the time contrast the idyllic rural Staten Island of New York with Blackwell's Island which could hardly have been more different. Blackwell's Island was a "*city of asylums*" where *"the city's disordered and disorderly […] would be transported to."* The Common Council of New York had bought the island in 1828 from James Blackwell (Burrows and Wallace, 1999, p. 532). By 1850, the island had become a laboratory for the management of the classified poor. On the island there was an alms-house as well as a smallpox hospital which was opened on Blackwell's southern tip in 1848, being replaced by a larger building in 1856. Blackwell's Island Lunatic Asylum was established in 1839 and replaced by two larger buildings in the late 1840s. A new workhouse was established in 1855. There was also a penitentiary near the island's south end (Burrows and Wallace, 1999, p.802). Brace's experiences on Blackwell's island where he started working with the inmates of various city institutions, led to his construction of the city as a place of poverty but also to his wish to help the poor.

His activities included preaching in the alms-house chapel and visiting prisoners, hospital patients and the insane. Letters of the time show that he was greatly moved by the diseased prostitutes (Nelson, 1980, pp.122–35), writing that "*I never had my whole nature so stirred up within me, as at what met my eyes in those hospital wards. […] You felt you were standing among the wrecks of the Soul; creatures cast out from everything but God's mercy. Oh 'twas the saddest most hopeless sight."* He described the prostitutes as *"ghastly faces peering from bandages around you and others all festering with disease or worn and seamed with passion."*

During this time, Brace's conviction that these people must be helped grew. He deplored the fact that "*the inefficiency of religion doesn't strike me so much in such places as in what I see every day. […]Religion is so seldom inspiring men with genial kindness and charity towards another" (Brace, 1894, p. 76).*

Beyond that, his wish to help these people was formed "*If I can have what I struggle always after, - a life imbued with truth and independence – I cannot help doing something*" (Brace, 1894, p. 78).

Likewise, during his first visit to London in 1903, Fairbridge arrived with a Rhodesian mindset: "*I was accosted by a benevolent old gentleman, who presumed that I belonged to the Wild West show [….I was highly indignant that an Englishman could not recognize a fellow Englishmen when he saw him. But this incident called my attention to my sun-bleached peaked hat, upon the rim of which was scored my big game kill on the Mazoe […]" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 144).*

On this journey, he had been shocked by the living conditions of the poor that he had encountered in England.

Fairbridge was stirred up emotionally as he had a "*keen sense of disappointment*", he was knocked out of the skies. In his autobiography he writes that "*I had expected a city of gold and white, mighty*

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thoroughfares, imposing edifices, solemnity." He had imagined finding *"stately processions of dignified citizens, conscious of the responsibilities of Empire" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 143).*

The housing "*straggled long lines of grimy three-storied living-houses,*" seemed "*ill-lit and uninviting"* to him (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 143).

He had also noted the large number of destitute children in the streets there, who were condemned to a life in the workhouse (Sherington and Jeffery, 1998, 15). Fairbridge paid special attention to the unique situation of the children. He was appalled that "*in a vast community like Great Britain thousands of children are born every year who by the death of one – or perhaps both – of their parents are left homeless and destitute*."

These children had to resort to a life in the streets: "*smallish, active young-looking people, shouting, running hither and thither, vending papers and posies and penny toys*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 146).

He contrasts the city with the countryside: "*the sparrows appealed to me tremendously*" and he was glad when he found "*an old friend,*" which is "*a very grimy fig-tree, growing against a wall in the Square*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 144).

Next to London, he visited Leeds, Norwich and Edinburgh and "*makes the inevitable comparisons between the great overcrowded cities and the lack of population in South Africa,*" which would further strengthen his vision to settle children there (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 146).

The Grand Journey Inspires: Models Encountered while Travelling

Both Fairbridge's and Brace's emigration schemes were part of this larger reform movement for wayward and dependent children. However, Fairbridge was also strongly affected by imperial motivations of child emigration that became prevalent from the early years of the twentieth century onwards (Parr, 1994, p. 147).

From the early nineteenth century a new phenomenon arose in Europe (Dekker, 2001, pp. 1–2) and America and a method of re-education or reformatory education, with the intention of reforming neglected and delinquent children so as to re-integrate them into society, became widespread.

After the establishment of the two leading institutions, Rauhe Haus and Mettray, in the eighteen-thirties and their tentative growth in the forties, the turnabout came in the following decades with the creation of an extensive system of re-education homes. Everywhere in Europe, small islands of re-education were founded. Agricultural colonies and child-saving homes were the most popular (Dekker, 2001, p. 73).

This reform movement was based on the principle that neglected and delinquent children, in whose cases the family, the school and all other forms of influence had failed, were taken away from their parents and temporarily isolated on the fringes of society, in an institution that was often far from any town or city. This approach was intended as a therapy to stop the marginalization that had set in and as a means to achieving the goal of reintegration into society; in this way chronic marginalization was to be prevented (Dekker, 2001, p. 2).Both the CAS and the CES were embedded in this reform movement.

In Britain, re-education in social isolation was also practised in far-flung places of the vast Empire. Emigration gained popularity as a form of childcare, as tens of thousands of children were sent to the colonies (Dekker, 2001, p. 77). From 1914, the CES joined these child reformation efforts and sent out more than 3000 children to its farm schools.

This reform movement was a transatlantic crusade, with the American members being a "*kind of interlocking directorate of reform."* Although many ideas originated in Europe (Hawes, 1971, p. 7), many of them were embraced in the United States, as the example of the CAS shows.

The connection between urbanization and juvenile problems became so close that reformers proposed as one solution the sending of city children to farms or remote reformatories (Hawes, Joseph M., 1971, p. 4). Brace and Fairbridge also followed this principle as shown in the previous paragraphs on their exaltation of nature, and shown by the schemes they would set up later which were based on the very same idea of sending children to the countryside.

As this reform movement spread across Europe and America, an international network of philanthropists emerged. These philanthropists visited the children's homes under each other's

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supervision, met at conferences and conventions, and admired, supported and learnt from one another. In the words of Dekker, in this way a form of "philanthropic tourism" came into being.

Also Brace, Maria Rye (a British philanthropist involved in child emigration), Annie MacPherson, (a British philanthropist who carried out child emigration – the sister of Louise Birt who ran the Liverpool Sheltering Homes) and Fairbridge took part in this tourism, which were seminal moments in their philanthropic endeavours as they first formed the view of a scheme of child emigrants.

Brace's Experience and Influence in Developing Child Emigration and Institutionalisation Models

Brace's travels to New York and Germany led him to a variety of models of reformatory education on which his later work would be based, by amalgamating the (in his view) most suitable elements of various reform endeavours that he had encountered. One of the prototypes that Brace used was the New York House of Refuge /New York Juvenile Asylum.

Although Brace was impressed by this system, he argued that the children were used as cheap labour and were not part of the family. Following the model of the New York House of Refuge, later on, Brace would set up a "placing out system" in which the children were not bound and either party was free to end the arrangement (Hawes, Joseph M., 1971, p. 100).

Braces first stop-over in Germany was the Inner Mission, where Brace met Wichern, who was convinced of "*the social evils in Germany; of the wrongs of the poor; of the little hold which religion has upon them; and of the utter want through the nation of any practical piety" (Brace, Charles Loring, 1853, p. 28).* Wichern had therefore founded the Inner Mission under which influence, orphanages, schools for vagrants, homes for abandoned and destitute women, hospitals and city missions were established.

The Inner Mission also established the Rauhe Haus for vagrant children (Nelson, 1980, pp. 122–135). The Rauhe Haus was located in the countryside near Hamburg to separate destitute and criminal youngsters from the bad influences of the city (Parr, 1994, p. 45). As a novelty, it sought to re-create the atmosphere of a middle class family, by establishing a family-like system, which meant that twelve children and an *"elder brother"* respectively lived together in a unit. The programme of the institution combined labour, religious service and a more formal education.

As a product of its time, there was a gendered division of labour. The boys worked in various workshops, such as shoe-making, tailoring, joinery, pattern-making, spinning, baking, etc., but also book-binding, printing, stereotyping, and wood and stone engraving. A few were employed outdoors in the regular farm work.

The girls were usually taught all branches of housekeeping, and from a certain age on were expected to enter service. The boys were generally apprenticed to masters (Brace, 1894, p. 89).

Brace visited the Rauhe Haus in 1850 and observed its way of operation in great detail.

Contrary to his expectations, "*the whole looked as little like the usual home for vagrants as it is possible. I saw no squads of boys walking demurely about […]. There were no heavy-looking overseers […] and there was not even the invariable home for forsaken children – the huge stone building, with one bare sunny court-yard."* Brace was very much impressed that it was a *"truly Christian"* institution.

In his observations, we find Brace's exaltation of nature once again – *as* well as the connotation of the countryside as a space of abundance as he reports that, "*It was a large, open garden, full of trees and walks and flowers and beds for vegetables, while on each side stretched away green corn-fields. Among the trees there were some dozen plain, comfortable little wood-houses, like old-fashioned farm-houses, scattered about, and one quiet, shaded chapel."*

We also re-encounter Brace's notion of the contrast of the city as a space of poverty as opposed to the countryside as an idyllic space of plenty once more: the children who had spent the first years of their lives in *"the dark cellars of a great city," "nourished amid filth and squalor,"* would now live in a *"Home among the Flowers,"* where they *"should at length see something of God's beautiful world; where among friends, in the midst of orchards and corn-fields, they could grow up."*

To his great contentment, during his visit Brace found the children working, writing that*: "The boys visible outside, were busy cleaning the flower-beds, or working in the harvest field; some also, repairing*

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fences and buildings[…]." In his view, the work that the boys carried out was "*hard*" but *"healthy"* and would *"invigorate"* them to *"manhood."*

Brace observed with great interest the "*peculiarity of the plan*" (Brace, 1853, pp.91-96) at the Rauhe Haus, namely the family system, about which he was ardent as he saw it as a predictor of success. In his opinion the most successful reformatories in Europe at the time, such as the Rauhe Haus, Mr Sydney Turner's Farm School at Tower Hill, England and the Mettrai colony in France used this model (Brace, 1872, p. 403).

According to Brace, the family system was successful *"as those who have no home of their own, as much as possible should be given of the home which God has prepared for all."*

Brace praised the fact that the children would be released as good citizens: *"that it should send out not only skilled apprentices, saved from the prison and the alms-house, but educated young Men to teach others, and to spread abroad the self-denying, Christian principles of the place" (Brace, 1853, 91-96).*

Brace also visited the "Friends in Need", a German charity organization which placed city children in the countryside (O'Connor, 2001, p. 95).

Beyond the Innere Mission, Brace was also inspired by its principles of the Colonie Agricole in Mettrai, France. Although he never visited the Mettrai Colonie Agricole, we know from his writings that he did know about the Colonie and that he considered the Colonie as a success, which in his words, was due to the *"esprit de corps*" found at the Colonie, and the "*love of distinction and honorable emulation which have been cultivated in the pupils*" (Brace, 1872, p. 403).

Interestingly, it should be mentioned that the founder of the Mettrai Colonie Agricole, M. Frederic Auguste Demetz, visited and was inspired by both the Rauhe Haus and several American juvenile institutions, among them the New York House of Refuge. As a result, the Mettray Colonie Agricole, just like the Rauhe Haus, had family units, but borrowed the features of larger units from American institutions, so that the family units were much larger, containing about 40 children. Apart from that, the Rauhe Haus and the Colonie were remarkably similar, in that they were placed in the countryside and relied on agricultural labour (Hawes, 1971, p. 80).

In 1865, a few years after the CAS was established in 1853 and the first children sent out in 1854, the board of trustees of the CAS, decided to send Brace to an exhibition in London, "*of the labors of the different reformatory and charitable institutions of all nations.*" From a letter to his wife we learn that, *"I have met a most interesting set of sanitarians, - able, clear-headed men of the middle class, improving England wonderfully now, - and am learning much. I have been examining 'ragged schools' and reformatories and model lodging-houses, and am collecting a vast number of reports, etc*" (Brace, 1894, p. 269).

He toured several "ragged" schools in London and Edinburgh (Parr, 1994, p. 45), which were based on the principle of reform rather than simple incarceration of the children. He also could not have failed to learn about the British system of permanently resettling children in the Dominions (Holt, 1992, p. 44).

These schools were founded to provide religious influence and education to children who were too shabby and poor to attend regular school.

Upon his return Brace "*utilized*" his observations made in England and *"tested them in a preventive institution"* by introducing measures that, "*though imitated in some respects from England, were novel in their combination*" (Brace, 1872, p. 316).

Brace's daughter Emma reports that her father returned from his travels with a vision writing that, *"Mr.Brace returned to New York with the intention of beginning immediately upon some course of work for the unfortunate in our great city […] but he was growing more and more to feel that it was not in the direction of a pastor's work, but rather in that of a city missionary, that his usefulness would lie" (Brace, 1894, p. 153).*

Following his travels, Brace wrote to his father, *"I want to raise up the outcast and homeless, to go down among those who have no friend or helper, and do something for them of what Christ has done for me. I want to be true – true always. […So did Christ" (Brace, 1894, p. 154).*

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On 9 January 1853, Brace was asked to become the leader of the provisionally named *"mission to the children"* founded by several influential men of New York, which was later named the "Children's Aid Society."

From his letters we learn that he planned to achieve in his new post *"to draw in boys, find them places in the country […] especially to be the means of draining the city of this class [of vagrant children] by communicating with farmers, manufacturers or families in the country who may have need of such employment" (Brace, 1894, pp. 156–158).* In 1855, the "placing out" work of the CAS was started (Parr, 1994, p. 45).

In line with what he had seen at the Inner Mission and Mettrai, Brace´s emigration plan envisaged to migrate children to the countryside, where both their "*character*" as well as their "*physique*" would be build up quickly and where "*health and morals"* had the best chance of developing (CAS, Sub-Subseries III.2, 57th Annual Report, 1907, p.32, N-YHS). Importantly, in this view, the success the children would achieve later in life was "*principally due to the healthy minds and bodies produced by life in the country*" (CAS, Sub-Subseries III.2, 55th Annual Report, 1907, p.32, N-YHS).

However, Brace went beyond the models imitating family life that he encountered on his journeys. In his quest for *"good, wholesome and homelike surroundings"*, he devised a plan to migrate city children to farmers in the countryside, *"where a child will be welcome, received on terms of equality with the family, and have an opportunity to develop into a self-respecting man or woman, equipped to take up the duties of life (Charles Loring Brace II, "The children of the poor in great cities" in Women's Home Companion, CAS, Subseries III.2, Box 12, 1892, N-YHS).* According to Brace, family life in a Christian home in the countryside was "*God's reformatory*" (Parr, 1994, p. 46): The superior moral and personal qualities of farmers, their good spirit, and their high moral values, the loving and nurturing character of the farmer's family, and the redemptive farm work the children would undertake, taken altogether, would make a rural home the ideal home for the children. In the good environment of the farmer's family the children would grow "*into manhood and womanhood*" and become respected citizens (CAS, Sub-Subseries III.2, 48st Annual Report, 1900, p.14, N-YHS;CAS, Sub-Subseries III.2, 54th Annual Report, 1906, p.17, N-YHS). Thus, farming families became vital in carrying out Brace´s migration policy. Farm parents would thus act as "*moral discipliners*" for a class of children from the city who desperately needed good examples to block the influence of poverty and vice (Birk, 2015, p. 18).

The British child emigration scheme was part of this wider reformatory movement at the time. Annie MacPherson visited the Rauhe Haus. She often wrote about the lessons she learnt there (Parr, 1994, p. 45). Moreover, there was active communication between the UK and the US actors: Annie MacPherson visited Brace in 1866. Maria Rye studied the mid-western section of Brace's work in 1868, and by 1870 both of them followed his example by placing children in Canada (Parr, 1994).

According to Sherington, Fairbridge probably knew little about child emigration schemes like those run by Louise Birt or Annie MacPherson during his first period in England. He did know and was associated with the work of the Church Missions at the East End of London (Sherington & Jeffery, 1998, p. 15), which aimed to combat poverty and squalor with a combination of evangelism and social work (East End Mission, n.d.).

An imperial vision – Fairbridge`s quest for a scheme to resettle destitute British children and to populate the Imperial countryside

Fairbridge had had a vision of building up and populating the Empire from an early age and this had become ever more concrete and clearer over time. His ideas had an imperial dimension.

As he grew up, he became aware of the vast and unused tracts of farming land in Rhodesia. He became involved in empire building himself from an early age, when at the age of twelve, his father sent him to build two huts in the countryside, about eight miles away from his home town. This trip of a pioneer boy into the wilderness was strongly overshadowed by heavy rain and a lack of food. In his autobiography Fairbridge describes that "*Under the urge of a chance adventure and driven by pride and hunger, I found a task and dreamed a dream which held me all the days of my boyhood and now occupies*

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every working hour ….So the vision came to me when I was starved and miserable: I spoke it out aloud: 'Someday I will bring farmers here'" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 24).

Fairbridge's visit to London refined his vision and gave him the concrete idea to concentrate on the children. As described above, Fairbridge had encountered child poverty in England, as well as the large overcrowded cities. He also realised that farming in Rhodesia required *"initiative, patience and knowledge"* for which long years of training would be needed. All of this made him think "*things over*" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 131).

On his return to his home country of South Africa following his first journey to England in 1903, he developed a plan: *"When you close your eyes on a hot day you may see things that have remained half hidden at the back of your brain. That day I saw a street in the east end of London. It was a street crowded with children* [… *. Children's lives wasting while the Empire cried aloud for men. There were workhouses full orphanages full – and no farmers. 'Farmers – children, farmers – children …' the words ran in my head* [… *. And then I saw it quite clearly:* Train the children to be farmers! *Not in England. Teach them their farming in the land where they will farm"* (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 158).

The reader gets the impression that the vision was divinely ordained*: "I will put this thing before the people of England – so help me God! I had been given a message […] there were moments of bitter lucidity, when for a moment the curtains were drawn aside and I viewed the path that lay ahead" (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 159).*

From this point on he also planned to go to New Zealand and Canada, to see these countries and to determine if there was a possibility of sending children there *(Fairbridge, 1974, p. 161).*

Fairbridge returned to England in 19808. Together with his wife, whom he had met at Oxford and with whom he left for Australia in 1912. In a poem to his wife, he chartered his past and their future undertaking (Jeffery & Sherington, 2013, p. 35):

"Thus I went to find thee: thus I came and found
Thee;
To do as was written, to work as is needed –
To live and love for the honour of England –
To fashion a dream in the form of a nation" (Fairbridge, Kingsley, 1909, p. 107).

In 1912, together with his wife, he started a farm school in Australia, for British child emigrants. Fairbridge was deeply devoted to the cause of imperialism, and in consequence the his farm school scheme was an intrinsically imperial endeavour. Moreover, he felt that it was his duty to help Britain retain its hold on its Empire by shaping the farm school children in the interest of the Empire (Boucher, 2014, p. 64).

In consequence, Kingsley Fairbridge devised a concrete plan for the farm school where *"the littlest colonists of the world's greatest Empire"* should grow up (Fairbridge, "Infant Immigrants at Home - Life at the Farm School", The Daily Mail, Newspaper Cutting, 1914, D296/F2/1, USCLA). According to Fairbridge, the object of his child emigration scheme was *"to provide emigration plus education, adjusted to agricultural and domestic life for children maintained by the State and other Public Bodies, or children orphaned, destitute or chargeable to the Public law" (CES, 17th Annual Report, 1925-1926, p.16, D296/D1/1/1, ULSCA).*

The children would live in farm schools where they would be trained to become farmers on the land of which they would later become farmers themselves as adults. They would thus be accustomed from the beginning to the special conditions of the country in which they would farm. Taking the example of Pinjarra in Western Australia, this was a small working farm, with animals, an orchard of 14 acres, crop fields, a vegetable garden and the some small gardens for the boys to work on their own (Hill, The Forgotten Children, 35; K.Fairbridge, "Child Immigration – An Address delivered by Mr.Kingsley Fairbridge of the Child Immigration Society, Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, under the auspices of the British Native Association, at the Wesley Hall, Murray Street, Perth", Texts by Kingsley Fairbridge (sermons, speeches, articles), 1920, D296/A2/16, ULSCA). The

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(British) children lived in little cottage homes, each shared by twelve children (Bean & Melville, 1989, p. 81), supervised by a matron with "*motherly qualities*" (CES, Arthur Lawley, "From Slums to Sunshine", 14th Annual Report, 1922-1923, 1922/1923, D296/D1/2/8, p.8, ULSCA). In this way, a homely family atmosphere, rather than that of an institution, would be conveyed (CES, Arthur Lawley, "From Slums to Sunshine", 16th Annual Report, 1924-1925, 1924/1925, D296/D1/2/8, p.5, ULSCA). A state teacher who lived on the premises of the farm school was responsible for the education of the children, while Fairbridge himself (at the farm school at Pinjarra) was responsible for their religious education (Hon. Sir Arther Lawley, "From Slums to Sunshine" CES, 14th Annual Report, 1922-1923, p.8, D296/D1/2/8, p5, ULSCA). Crucially, part of their curriculum would be to develop an awareness of *"the acknowledged duty of individuals towards God and Man; the glory of England; the essential unity of the Empire."* (K. Fairbridge, 'Letter from Fairbridge to Earl Grey', Outlines and Draft Agreements, 5th August 1908, D296/A1/1, ULSCA).

Conclusion

This article has compared the long-distance voyages and expeditions of Brace and Fairbridge. Furthermore, it has delved into the "inner journeys" that these two philanthropists took while travelling.

The goal of this study was to shed light on how two child emigration programmes came into being as a result of two philanthropists' travels, which prompted them to each set up a child emigration scheme after returning to their home nations. This study also looked at how aspects of child reform programmes which Brace and Fairbridge discovered on their travels were incorporated into their own child emigration strategies.

In conclusion, the present article has demonstrated how the child emigration movement started off with a "histoire croisee", as ideas about how to deal with needy and abandoned children jumped (Bayly, 2004, p. 3) across the Atlantic and across empires. As an extensive "philanthropic tourism" emerged, a considerable interconnectedness (Bayly, 2004, p. 1) in the way the idea of using child emigration as an imperial tool of social reform was developed on both sides of the Atlantic, since policy makers in both countries learnt from each other.

Comparing the CES and the CAS, common features (Bayly, 2004, p. 471) and convergence can be found in the way the problem of child poverty is perceived and the solution of child emigration is found. Both Fairbridge and Brace undertook very similar travels and explorations in imperial contexts while trying to find a solution for the problem of child poverty.

The two philanthropists grew up in a (former) white settler colony, which was (Rhodesia) or had been (United States) part of the British Empire. Both were from conservative middle class backgrounds, educated at elite universities. Following this sheltered childhood and youth, the two young men were exposed to poverty in their early adulthood in the cities of New York and London.

But, at the same time, by travelling, Fairbridge and Brace also became aware of a vast array of different voluntary associations which aimed to counter poverty. Both were inspired by these models.

In their minds, both of them, based on their personal experience, constructed the space of the city as a space of poverty and the space of the countryside as an ideal space of plenty.

Reformation and opportunity for the poor children of the city lay in the open spaces both had known and imagined as a child.

Both had an environmentalist notion to take the children out of their environment.

At this early stage, the visions are also revealing about the "Menschenbild" (attitude towards people) of the two visionaries. Fairbridge associated the children with farmers *"'Farmers – children, farmers – children …' the words ran in my head […]"* (Fairbridge, 1974, p. 158). This is an important association as he had confidence in the capabilities of the children to become farmers, and to literally rise from the gutters (CES, Arthur Lawley, 'From Slums to Sunshine', 16th Annual Report, 1924-1925, 1922/1923, D296/D1/2/8, p.5, ULSCA).

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Brace as well has a positive outlook on the poor as can be seen from his encounters on Blackwell Island. In his vision he clearly expresses his conviction that it is possible to *"raise up the outcast and homeless"(*Brace, 1894, p. 154).

The 1922 Empire Settlement Act, created an 'official' partnership between the government and voluntary organisations such as the CES which now received government funding to carry out their work (Constantine, 2008). This partnership was based on constant negotiations, as for example in 1937, when the Empire Settlement Act was renewed.

There is considerable divergence in that the British child emigration scheme and also the CES (in contrast to the American one and the CAS's placing out scheme) were strongly influenced by the prevailing Empire settlement movement at the time. This major difference is due to the fact that Britain was a colonial state with an ambition to consolidate its Empire. To Fairbridge the British Empire was an Empire of expanding rural horizons.(Jeffery & Sherington, 2013, p. 35)

Thereby the British (as compared to the Americans) had more strategic views, linked to re-balancing the population throughout the Empire by taking children from overpopulated cities and sending them to settler colonies in need of development. In contrast, the Americans did not see themselves as a demographic "*planning agency*" (CAS, Sub-Subseries III.2, 41st Annual Report, 1893, p.8, N-YHS). Quite on the contrary, the CAS made sure they sent children exclusively to farms supported by a well-developed infrastructure, such as a church and a school, where no further development was needed. Moreover, the CAS as compared to the CES had a more ideological concept of the countryside as an antidote to urban slums (which included healthy countryside living, Protestant famers, etc.),

Major differences between the two countries can also be found in discourses surrounding evaluations of the outcomes of these knowledge transfers at the time and today.With regard to the British case, a report assembled by Mr W.J. Garnett, secretary to the UK High Commissioner on the state of the Fairbridge Farm Schools, in late 1944, found that although saved from a very meagre and perhaps short existence, not all children thrived at the farm school, as the conditions there were not always favorable. As adults, only a few were able to become peasant proprietors (Garnett, 1944). This kind of external evaluations did not take place in the US at the time.

Since 2018, an investigation and historical reappraisal has been carried out by the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which is still underway (Australian Royal Commission, 2017). In addition, a court trial took place, which awarded 24$ million to the victims of physical and sexual abuse at a Fairbridge farm school, in the aftermath of which an official apology was made by Australian Prime Minister Mike Baird to those victims stating that "They were not given the future they were promised or the childhood they deserved" (Gerathy, 2015).

In the US, in the absence of a discourse of historical reappraisal or legal investigations of the orphan trains, there is a feeling of "nostalgia" as regards the orphan train movement, maybe because it is seen as a precursor of the modern foster care system (Katz, 1986, p. 12)?

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