Transcultural Utopian Imagination and the Future: Tagore, Gandhi, Andrews, and India–Britain Entanglements in the Early 1930s

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the transcultural utopian imaginings of futures in early twentieth-century India and Britain, with Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, anti-colonial politician M. K. Gandhi, and British Christian activist C. F. Andrews at the center. Homing in on two trips made to England by Tagore (1930) and Gandhi (1931), especially their visits to Woodbrooke Quaker College in Birmingham, and on Gandhi's visit to Lancashire, the article shows how British Christian and Quaker utopians and Indian utopians cooperated with each other. The article excavates the utopian experiments of Corder Catchpool, also a Quaker, in Darwen, Lancashire, where Gandhi stayed. Religion should be accorded an important place in our understanding of utopia, the article argues. A human propensity to create a paradoxical sense of futurity that does not negate the past, one that Tagore highlights in The Religion of Man (1931), is found in all the utopians discussed.

KEYWORDS: *utopia, Gandhi, Tagore, Quakers, religion*

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> For our physical life has its thread of unity in the memory of the past, whereas this ideal life dwells in the prospective memory of the future.
> —Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man*

This article focuses on transcultural utopian imagination of social futures in early twentieth- century India and Britain, with Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), and his friend and associate M. K. Gandhi (1869–1948) at the center. The passage quoted is from *The Religion of Man* by Tagore (1931) which deals with the "idea of the humanity of our God, or the divinity of Man the Eternal," a text written during Tagore's stay at Woodbrooke, a Quaker residential educational institution in Selly Oak, Birmingham, in the Midlands in England.[1] Tagore and Gandhi's British friend C. F. Andrews (1871–1940), a Christian anticolonial and social activist, a key influence on Gandhi's 1931 visit to Lancashire, is another focus. I argue that Tagore's and Gandhi's visits to England (specifically the Midlands and/or the north of that country) in 1930 and 1931 illuminate Indo-British entanglements in utopianism, manifesting ideals of social futures in which values were shared with Christian, mainly Quaker utopians.

Although some scholars have published on encounters between Tagore, Gandhi, and their British associates, mainly C. F. Andrews, and Quaker figures Horace Alexander and Marjorie Sykes, the Quaker-Tagore-Gandhi relationship in Britain is still an obscure area in scholarship.[2] While valuable analysis is emerging of the support rendered to Gandhi's civil disobedience activism by "humanitarians of the British empire," there has been no analysis of how important these entanglements are in understanding modern utopianism and social futures.[3]

The article first discusses the framing notions of utopia and social dreaming, the transcultural, and entanglements. It argues that Tagore and Gandhi, both utopian actors and writers, were influenced by and in turn influenced British utopian actors and thinkers. Of such British utopians, some are especially important: John Ruskin (1819–1900), whose utopian thought valorizing social fellowship and religion and speaking against wage capitalism influenced Gandhi, while also influencing the settlement movement contributing to the foundation of the Quaker institution at Woodbrooke; C. F. Andrews; and Quaker utopian actors and writers associated with Woodbrooke who became friends and associates of Tagore, Gandhi, and Andrews. I show, homing in on two trips made to England by Tagore (1930) and Gandhi (1931), especially

on both their visits to Woodbrooke in the Midlands and on Gandhi's visit to Lancashire in northern England, that British and Indian utopians cooperated with and mutually influenced each other. I excavate, with regard to Gandhi's Lancashire visit, the work of the Quaker social dreamer Corder Catchpool (1883–1952), and his utopian experiments in Spring Vale Garden Village, where Gandhi stayed in 1931. This article has a specific focus on the Christian, especially Quaker, associates of Tagore and Gandhi, and as such does not bring into its ambit Tagore's close British associate Leonard Elmhirst.

The mutual human sympathy shown by Gandhi and the Lancashire inhabitants during Gandhi's 1931 visit is far better understood once we acknowledge how much Tagore's and Gandhi's British utopian friends and contacts were bound in sympathy with these Indians by common goals of social cooperation, fellowship, love, and practical experimentation, with the Quakers of Woodbrooke as a bridge. Such utopian goals rendered Gandhi's visit to Lancashire to meet cotton-mill owners and workers under difficult circumstances a human success.

The Indian and British utopian figures active in the 1930s examined here envisaged the future in ways that were often animated by aspects of the past, usually a renovated and reimagined past, in which religion is important. The quotation from Tagore with which this article opens prompts one to ask how memory can be prospective, or anticipatory. How can one analyze such a paradoxical vision of temporality? On memory, one notes that Tagore highlights in *The Religion of Man* the human propensity to create a sense of futurity that does not negate the past: this paradoxical future-making through remembrance is also a form of utopianism. The British utopian actors analyzed here are Christians, the majority of them Quakers, with their socially activist brand of religion inclined toward bridging past and future; Tagore and Gandhi too thought that the past and present of India, including aspects such as rural and agrarian life, were vital to the future society they envisioned, and the utopian ashram communities founded by both (Tagore's Santiniketan and Sriniketan, Gandhi's Phoenix and Tolstoy Farms in South Africa and Sabarmati Ashram and Sevagram in India) remembered, revitalized, and reinvented the past social and educational communities of ancient India. Many Gandhian ashrams, inspired by Gandhi (even after his death), and not led by him, have existed and exist today.[4] Sodepur Niketan in West Bengal, India, founded by chemist and Gandhian Satish Chandra Dasgupta in 1921, is just one example among many; the Gandhian ashram is also transnational and transcultural,

found in other Asian countries such as Indonesia (founded by the female Gandhian Ibu Gedong Oka in 1970, Ashram Canti Dasa in Bali, which also has much Quaker involvement, is perhaps the best-known example).[5]

If we consider the term *prospective*, we find that a prospect is both a mental picture and an anticipated event, usually seen from a vantage point. The utopian communities in India and Britain, such as Woodbrooke, Spring Vale Garden Village, Savarmati Ashram, and Santiniketan, that these Indian and British figures worked in, or helped build, were places and vantage points from which they imagined the future. Such places of experimentation enshrined utopian social, educational, and literary practices. Education, spanning school to continuing education for adults, lay at the heart of Tagore's and Gandhi's utopian communities and thought.[6] Ruskin, a great influence on Gandhi, was a pioneer in adult education; the educational institution Woodbrooke, like Ruskin College in Oxford, was also a pioneer in adult education.

This article further argues that religion should be accorded an important place in our understanding of utopia. The rich and deep connections between the Quakers and Gandhi, Tagore, and Andrews, all believers in the importance of religion in social dreaming, are highlighted in the article. Tagore was a member of the liberal and reformist religious grouping, the Brahmo Samaj, a branch of Hinduism. This monotheistic group was founded in 1828 by Rammohan Roy (1772–1833), who was also close to the Unitarians. The Quakers, or the Society of Friends, are a Christian denomination believing that the light of God is to be found within the individual. The Brahmos and Quakers espouse a liberal, reformist, egalitarian ethos. Their reformism imbues the past (that established religions are rooted in) with the spirit of renewal. Such a quest for renewal is also found in the work and thought of Gandhi, a devout Hindu, from the Vaishnava sect (pacifist and vegetarian in beliefs), who engaged in dialogue with religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity.[7]

Utopia

Utopia is a connotative term and is viewed in this article as a mode in human thought and imagination. Ruth Levitas argued that utopia is the expression of the desire for a better way of being or of living, braided through human culture, analogous to a quest for religious grace that is both existential and

relational. A definition of *utopia* in terms of desire is analytic rather than descriptive, writes Levitas. She also talks of utopia, in one of its many connotations, as entailing "a more holistic outline of an alternative society."[8] Gandhi and Tagore were experimenters with the utopian method and were also envisioners of alternative societies and futures.

Transcultural and transnational approaches, furthering a comparative understanding of utopianism, frame my work. Valuable recent work in utopian studies has re-examined utopia as a mode present across all cultures, not just in the "Western" tradition, and argued for the presence of intercultural imaginaries of ideal life in different cultures.[9] This article takes a somewhat different approach. The piece shows the commonalities between some notable British and Indian utopian approaches, in the 1930s. The article also argues for two-way influence: while a British figure like Ruskin influenced Gandhi, the article also shows the Indian figures Gandhi and Tagore influencing and helping to shape the social dreaming of their British colleagues such as Andrews. The transcultural and transnational approaches, and the approach of entangled histories are also vital in this piece. The transcultural and transnational are relational approaches, examining transmissions, interactions, circulations, and interweaving between nations and cultures, relativizing the national perspective without banishing the category of the nation from mental horizons, and eschewing a view of cultures as sutured and monoclonal.[10] Also important for this article's view of the transcultural are the notions of entanglements and entangled histories; here, a key concern is "the production of new insight from a constellation that is in itself interwoven."[11] "Non-western" utopian texts and practices should not be viewed only in terms of otherness and difference to their 'Western' counterparts, nor should they be viewed only in terms of being influenced by the "Western." Tagore and Gandhi took part in building real-life utopian communities that combined local, regional, national, and international, including European, influences.

While Leela Gandhi has focused on the politics of friendship in utopian-socialist thought, there is no study that examines entanglements in utopian writing and thought in early twentieth-century India and Britain.[12] Even Bill Ashcroft, examining postcolonial utopianism, has not been attentive to these aspects.[13] Utopian studies, the history of activism, and literary analysis of nonfictional prose are mobilized to understand transcultural utopia in this article.

Educational activities were vital to the practices of all the figures focused on in this article. In Britain adult education communities (of which Woodbrooke is a notable example) were deeply influenced by mid-nineteenth-century Christian Socialist endeavors to bring the social classes together, such that this would contribute to the resolution of the "social question." The settlement movement in Britain, seeking to make students reside within impoverished areas to work alongside local people, was utopian, bringing together the notion of a community, and its being imbued with social ideals. The settlement movement was also greatly influenced by Ruskin, who himself taught at a Working Men's College, and "who wrote trenchant and lucid attacks on the social divisions of the time and the need for new forms of fellowship." John Wilhelm Rowntree, pioneer in the adult school movement and son of the Quaker industrialist Joseph Rowntree, as well as Quaker industrialist George Cadbury were influential in founding Woodbrooke in 1903, which was housed in Cadbury's former family home. Woodbrooke was intended as a center for study, with a religious commitment to finding solutions to the question of the relationships between the social classes.[14] These movements in England, as also those led by Tagore and Gandhi in India, desire to emplace utopian values, with educational practice renewing society, and with Levitas's notion of utopia as a heuristic method also applicable.

Richard Fox calls Gandhi "the utopian experimentalist forever pursuing elusive truth." G. Lowes Dickinson called Tagore The Great Utopian in a festschrift celebrating Tagore's seventieth birthday.[15] Utopia, as Fox's quote makes clear, lies also at the level of the human self for Gandhi. This is also true for Tagore, who expressed himself through writing, creative thinking, and constructive and creative work—social cooperation was his idiom, as with the Quakers.[16] In Tagore's open utopian educational space in Santiniketan and Sriniketan in rural Bengal, he founded a set of educational and cooperative experiments, including a school (founded in 1901) and a world university, Visva-Bharati (set up in a series of steps between 1918 and 1921), of which the motto was "where the world makes its home in a single nest."[17]

Gandhi's vision of utopia is based in the republican, self-sustaining village, envisaged as an oceanic circle, and explicitly termed utopian.[18] Gandhi's utopian ideals were also articulated in *Hind Swaraj*, written in Gujarati in 1908 during Gandhi's voyage from London to South Africa, with this history of mobility a telling pointer to a dialogic and transcultural work.[19] Gandhi argued here that nonviolent "eagerness for truth" or *satyagraha* would be

an apt weapon against the injustices of colonialism. Another key idea in the book is *Swaraj*, which means both self-rule for India, and the rule of the self over itself.[20]

Sabyasachi Bhattacharya has analyzed cogently the major differences of perspective between Tagore and Gandhi.[21] Tagore's belief in individual freedom was higher than Gandhi's, Tagore's educational ideas and practices prized individual flowering and development, while Gandhi emphasized education as productive work, even at school level, helping to create community self- sufficiency.[22] Tagore critiqued political plans, prominent in Gandhi-led anticolonial movements, to boycott British educational institutions. Unlike Gandhi, Tagore did not think that the burning of foreign cloth and a fetishized espousal of hand-spinning with the *charkha* would be fruitful for India.[23] But the men had many similarities, including a commitment to village-level cooperative, constructive work and a keen commitment to rethinking and renovating education.

Ruskin's *Unto This Last* argued that in his ideal society "no one is to be the first, and none the last."[24] The title of Ruskin's *Unto This Last* was drawn from the biblical parable of the Workers in the Vineyard, where Jesus says that any laborer who accepts the invitation to the work in a vineyard, even if he begins late in the day, will receive an equal reward with those who have been faithful the longest.[25] Ruskin used the parable, *inter alia*, to envision a world where governments would set up manufactories to allow more employment, and where employers should not be able to drive wages down by playing off worker against worker. Gandhi agreed.

In *Sarvodaya*, Gandhi's transcreation of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, Gandhi writes, "Our Swaraj must be real Swaraj, which cannot be attained by either violence or industrialization. India was once a golden land, because Indians then had hearts of gold."[26] Swaraj feels utopian here, imbued with the notion of values, and to be emplaced in India, as well as in the selves of Indians. Gandhi transculturated *Unto this Last* through Sarvodaya, a concept that outlived him, and stirred Asian social movements. A Gandhian spirit of voluntarism, social trusteeship, self-regulation, and willingness on the part of people to give away (*dan* in Sanskrit) land (*bhoodan*), labor (*sramadan*), and property (*sampattidan*) surcharged Sarvodaya social movements, which were especially vital till the late 1970s in India; such movements are also transnational phenomena, found in India's neighboring country, Sri Lanka.[27]

Tagore's Visit to England in 1930 and Utopian Dynamics

Gandhi's and Tagore's many trips to different countries energized their utopian thought and practices. Tagore visited Britain from May 11, 1930, to July 1930 and from December 22, 1930, to January 15, 1931, with the spring-summer visit relevant for this article. He stayed in spring 1930 at Woodbrooke, where he wrote his Hibbert Lectures for the University of Oxford, subsequently published as *The Religion of Man* (1931).[28] Tagore arrived in Britain at a moment of political crisis, at a point when Gandhi started the Civil Disobedience Movement. Tagore, Gandhi, and Andrews had already been in friendly contact with Woodbrooke. Tagore wrote to the newspaper the *Manchester Guardian*, condemning the arrest of Gandhi in India.[29] In Woodbrooke Tagore gave a talk warning against the mechanical forms of modern civilization. He also addressed the Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, on Empire Day, May 24, 1930, describing British rule in India as a life-destroying machine. He urged his hearers to affirm their trust in "the best minds of the East and West" joining hands and establishing a "truly human bond of interdependence between England and India," wishing that "they may gain an abiding strength of life through a spirit of mutual service without having to bear a perpetual burden of slavery on one side and that of a diseased responsibility on the other."[30] During this meeting, Jack Hoyland, one of the Woodbrooke friends of Tagore, Gandhi, and Andrews, also compared the Indian freedom struggle to campaigns against slavery.[31]

In *The Religion of Man* Tagore sees human creative self-expression as the hallmark of religion, with science, philosophy, literature, arts, service, and worship all seen as manifestations of religion (17). Tagore sees the world as comprised of plural civilizations, notably India, China, Persia, Judaea, Greece, and Rome (56). He sees the major world religions appearing as "protest against the earlier creeds which had been unhuman, where ritualistic observances had become more important and outer compulsions more imperious" (64) with religions having founders "who represented in their life a truth which was not cosmic and unmoral, but human and good" (71). Tagore thus espouses transcultural human-centeredness in his analysis of religion. The Tagoreian view of evolution sees a force continuously at play, moving toward perfection in the future, part of a creative principle fundamental to the universe. The ideal life striving toward perfection, also oriented toward futurity,

can unite past and present in a paradoxical "memory of the future," which in turn through creativity can overcome and transcend the linear arrow of time experienced by biological organisms.

Love is for Tagore a force that frees man "from the sole monarchy of hunger, of the growling voice, snarling teeth and tearing claws, from the dominance of the limited material means, the source of cruel envy and ignoble deception." Tagore sees "the largest wealth of the human soul" produced through "sympathy and co-operation" (49).

All in all, *The Religion of Man* has a transcultural sweep, and envisions humanity crafting its social futures with religions and civilizations interconnected and engaged in social and human evolution, with the individual human self being nonetheless the key site for emancipation and knowledge. Love, as in the thought of Gandhi, Andrews, and Quaker associates, is seen by Tagore as a binding, positive force.

C. F. Andrews: Pivotal Transcultural Figure

In these Indo-British entanglements, C.F. Andrews was a fascinating and pivotal figure. I discuss Andrews here, between discussions of Tagore and Gandhi, since he, through whom Tagore and Gandhi first met, was also a key reason behind Gandhi's trip to Lancashire. In 1913 Andrews and W. W. Pearson had visited Gandhi in South Africa, with Tagore's blessings. Andrews kept Tagore informed of Gandhi's South African activities, and arranged for some of Gandhi's Phoenix Farm students and Gandhi himself to visit Santiniketan. Tagore and Gandhi first met in Santiniketan in March 1915.

Andrews was born in Newcastle, grew up in Birmingham (thus having roots in the north of England and the Midlands), studied in Cambridge, first went to India as part of the Anglican Cambridge Mission, met and became close friends with Tagore and Gandhi, and dedicated his life to antiracist, anticolonial Christian activism for Indians and for indentured labor of South Asian origin in countries such as South Africa, Guiana, and Fiji.[32] His work led to Indian indentured labor being abolished in British colonies in 1920. Andrews published his autobiography, *What I Owe to Christ*, in 1932.[33] The book validates transformative dialogues across cultures and shows that in the fluidity of culture lies much of its power: in these respects, it is similar

to *The Religion of Man*, though Andrews's book is generically an autobiography, unlike Tagore's essays. Andrews writes that his publishers in London had requested he write "a volume telling us in a simple manner the changes which have come over your own religious outlook as you have wandered over the earth, mingling with all sorts and conditions of men" (11). Andrews shows in this book the kind of transcultural utopian sweep and critical antiracism and anticolonialism that makes him a figure deserving of far greater study—yet scholars have not analyzed him as a utopian thinker and actor.

Andrews's autobiography was written and revised in places to which his antiracist, humanitarian spirit took him: British Guiana, Trinidad, in the company of Indian Ocean people with memories of living in "hard conditions of indenture bordering on slavery itself," and the company of Blacks "in St. Helena's Island, off the coast of South Carolina" (25, 26). Andrews writes too of different utopian communities that bear particularly warm memories for him: "memories, dearest of all, of Santiniketan Asram in India" and "Woodbrooke in England," which offered him "quiet recollection which is sorely needed." (2, 28). In St. Helena's Andrews was learning about the race question in the United States, based at the Penn School, founded for freed slaves in 1862, in the company of Hubert Peet, editor of *The Friend*.[34] Andrews had come into contact with Woodbrooke in the 1920s and became a dear associate of prominent Quakers, such as Horace Alexander and Hoyland, who supported Gandhi's anticolonial struggle. Andrews's principal prospects were places of education and social fellowship, cutting across different races, peoples, and prejudices.

Andrews wrote, "During my life in the East, the startling originality of Jesus Christ, as the most revolutionary religious thinker whom the world has ever seen, has come home to me much more than in the West" (229). The East, then, contrary to stereotypes, brought home to Andrews not serenity, but the insurgent protest of Christ. And in Natal in South Africa, Andrews found racial prejudice vitiating Christianity (239). Andrews, like Tagore, believed in "an organic unity, beneath the outward traces of religion, which needed to be traced, if mankind was ever to become one in spirit" and this sense was triggered in him by his feeling that Gandhi was spiritually both "Hindu" and "Christian" (252). The diary of a key British administrator associated with the Manchester Chamber of Commerce in the 1930s makes clear that Andrews and his Quaker friends were the crucial motivators behind Gandhi's visit to

Lancashire.[35] Andrews felt compassion for the sufferings of the cotton workers, whom he wanted Gandhi to dialogue with; moreover, Andrews, to the ire of the official British cotton industry-related bodies, let the press know of Gandhi's Lancashire visit in late September 1931 on his own initiative.[36]

Gandhi's Visit to England and Utopian Dynamics

Gandhi arrived in London on September 12, 1931, primarily to take part in the Round Table conference between representatives of the British government and Indian politicians; he left England on December 5, 1931. In late September he visited Lancashire, meeting with representatives of the cotton industry at Edgeworth and Darwen. On September 26, 1931, he received a deputation of unemployed workers at Spring Vale Garden Village, Darwen. Having, *inter alia*, spoken on Lancashire's unemployment problem, having received deputations from weavers' associations and unemployed workers, and having spoken to journalists, Gandhi left northern England. He then went to Woodbrooke, where he stayed for less than two days. On October 18, 1931, he spoke there on achieving freedom from British colonialism through peaceful means. Having taken part in the Round Table Conference in London, he left England. For both Tagore and Gandhi, their early 1930s visits were their last to the Europe.

Gandhi was gifted Ruskin's *Unto This Last* by his British-Jewish friend in South Africa in 1904. Gandhi writes that he learned, from a "poet," Ruskin, "through the magic spell of a book," that all work is or should be viewed with equal value and dignity.[37] Gandhi called Tagore a "poetic genius," too, whose "singular purity of life has raised India in the estimation of the world.[38] The imagination remained very important to Gandhi, even if he saw himself, contrariwise, not as the poet but as the experimenter in and seeker after Truth, as the title of his autobiography, the *Story of My Experiments with Truth*, suggests.

In Gandhi learning from Ruskin that a life of labor, of the tiller and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living, the recoil from machinic, urban, industrial life is implicit. For Gandhi, as for Ruskin, the merely machinic-industrial is indeed recoiled from.[39] Handloom or hand weaving, part of India's past and present traditions, and of Gandhi's vision of India's future, lay at the heart of Gandhi's utopian project. The spinning-wheel with which Gandhi and millions of his followers spun coarse cotton, khadi, was a concrete image of his

commitment to village India, to the artisanal, and to the beauty of the handmade product. Handwoven cloth was very different from the machine-woven cloth that the British cotton industry produced, notably in Lancashire. Ruskin, of course, had also shared this commitment to handicrafts.[40]

In Lancashire Gandhi met worried representatives of the cotton industry, in decline then for very many reasons, but with one perceived reason being that Indian boycott of and imposition of tariffs on manufactured Lancashire cotton by Indian provincial governments were contributing to the decline of the UK industry—although there were diverse causes behind this decline including the ascendancy of Japan-manufactured cotton.[41] Gandhi stayed in cotton manufacturing areas such as Darwen, known as a cotton town. Cotton grown elsewhere, including, notably India, was processed and woven in Darwen. India's own flourishing handloom cotton industry suffered deindustrialization under nineteenth-century British colonialism. Prohibitive tariffs excluded Indian cotton goods from England, while British processed cotton goods were allowed into India free of duty or on payment of a nominal duty.[42] So when Gandhi visited Lancashire in 1931, the wheel of fortune of industrial capitalism had made a sharp turn. At Woodbrooke Gandhi and other members of his party, such as Mahadev Desai and Madeleine Slade, also hand-spun cloth.[43] Hand-spinning so visibly in industrialized Britain, in a context of the decline of British machine-woven cotton, Gandhi and his companions built up a memorable dialogue with fellow social dreamers in Britain.

"War is the law of the jungle; suffering is the law of love," Gandhi said at the end of his speech at Woodbrooke, resonant with his Quaker friends' and Tagore's and Andrews's views.[44] So it was with a vision of love, and of understanding of mutual suffering, that Gandhi visited Lancashire, meeting cotton manufacturers, cotton workers, and other ordinary people, at Darwen. Corder Catchpool, one of those who invited Gandhi to Lancashire, is undeservedly little studied. Catchpool, a pacifist, like Gandhi, was friends with Percy Davies, whom he met at the Quaker school at Sidcot. Davies (1886–1950), through family inheritance became a mill-owner in Darwen. Catchpool, in Davies's employment as the welfare officer in the Davies family mills, was the key planner and designer of Spring Vale Garden Village, where Gandhi stayed, at the cottage that Catchpool had lived in earlier. Spring Vale Garden Village was inspired by the Quaker-founded utopian community of Bournville and its Quaker industrialist founder, George Cadbury, who was, along with J. W. Rowntree, key to the foundation of Woodbrooke. Spring

Vale Garden Village was a utopian community organization with many nodes of work led by Catchpool till his departure. Catchpool wrote of his work, in a register reminiscent of Gandhi, "It is just in bringing love into the details of everyday life, the dry business details, that life becomes so rich and wonderful." Catchpool, incidentally, also had strong, and early links with Woodbrooke, through Neave Brayshaw, Catchpool's former teacher at Bootham, who later joined Woodbrooke as staff member.[45] Thus, even Gandhi's Darwen visit had close links with his Woodbrooke Quaker contacts.

A common discourse of love and resonant practices of social cooperation and improvement thus bound Catchpool with Gandhi and with other British Christian social dreamers such as Andrews and their Woodbrooke friends. The socially experimental work undertaken by figures such as Catchpool, with their commitments to social cooperation and fellowship, need to be seen as contributing factors behind the cordiality shown to Gandhi by the people of Lancashire: Gandhi was reported as saying, "I had never expected anything but courteous treatment from the workpeople of Lancashire, but was quite unprepared for the manifestation of deep affection that the crowds of people lining the streets yesterday spontaneously showed to me."[46]

Conclusion

Tagore, Gandhi, Catchpool, Andrews, and members of the Woodbrooke circle such as Hoyland were activists who believed that religion, resistance, love, suffering, and pacifism go hand in hand, and who dialogued across cultures. They all believed in community renovation. Education, ethics, and aesthetics are interwoven in these Indo-British transcultural entanglements. These figures' views of the future as prospective memory do not eschew the past. The transcultural encounters in utopian writing and practice in the 1930s, in which movements for peace and decolonization, led by figures focused on in this article, coexisted with a mingled sense of somberness and hope, seem particularly apposite to analyze from our present horizon in the twenty-first century, with a similar sense of utopian hope amidst somber, often dystopian conditions.

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Notes

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