

POST-MODERN PILGRIMAGE: A QUAKER RITUAL

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A remarkable example of pilgrimage, new in the twentieth century, is the Quaker pilgrimage—remarkable because it would seem not to accord with what is generally perceived as an outstanding feature of Quakerism, namely the rejection of ritual, images, crosses, and holy places. Yet Quakers are organizing and participating in a ritual at first sight similar to that found in many parts of the world where it is embedded in the culture of various communities—for example, Catholic, Islamic, Hindu, or Buddhist. The phenomenon of pilgrimage, its significance to religion, its meaning for the individual pilgrim, and the part it plays in the expression of beliefs and values have all been examined by many sociologists in the twentieth century.

Following Durkheim, the pilgrimage may be seen as a cultic gathering with strong ancestral connections for the reinforcement of the *conscience collective*. Victor Turner applies van Gennep's analysis of rites of passage to the phenomenon of pilgrimage and finds it to be a 'liminoid'¹ period for the participants, who, after segregation from their society, form a *communitas*, a spontaneous, egalitarian association of individuals freed from their roles in that society (Turner and Turner 1978: 35, 250, 253). Michael Sallnow, however, finds, at least in the Andean pilgrimage he researched, that there can be a strengthening of the existing community, a further development of relationships which then perdure after the ritual per-

¹ Turner adopts the word 'liminoid', considering that pilgrimage is 'quasi-liminal', since pilgrimage is not part of a structured rite of passage (Turner and Turner 1978: 35).

formance is over (1981: 163–81). In her study of the pilgrimage to Lourdes, Andrea Dahlberg reveals that it represents more than one religious discourse, not only healing, the best known, but also the affirmation of human disability and a sacrificial sharing in the Passion of Christ (1991: 20–50). Alphonse Dupont attempts to find a universal model of pilgrimage, defining it as ‘a quest for the sacred’, which echoes Mircea Eliade (in Eade and Sallnow 1991: 27 n.). Individual pilgrims are found to give different reasons for taking part in the rite, some seeking healing, some forgiveness, some ‘verifying and materializing the sacred scriptures’ by a visit to the Holy Land (ibid.: 9). Small wonder that the contributors to the conference on pilgrimage convened by John Eade in 1991 were found to reveal ‘the essential heterogeneity of the pilgrimage process’ (ibid.: 2–3). No one theory applies to them all, and any one may exhibit a number of elements, each characteristic of some other pilgrimage. It is in this multifarious human activity that the Quaker pilgrimage will be found to take its origin.

Most Quaker pilgrimages are directed to the ‘1652 Country’, that is, the area between Lancashire in the south and Swarthmore, near Ulverston, in the north, a region traversed by George Fox in that year. Fox’s preaching and his success in gathering a considerable number of followers led to 1652 being regarded as the beginning of Quakerism. To mark the tercentenary in 1952, Elfrieda Vipont Foulds published a short book, *The Birthplace of Quakerism*, which bore the subtitle *A Handbook for the 1652 Country*, obviously being intended as a guidebook by describing a large number of sites worthy of a visit, and telling of the activities of Quakers at each place. This book has proved popular: the fifth edition was published in 1997. A comprehensive history of the interest shown by individuals and groups over the centuries has been written by Angus Winchester in his article ‘The Discovery of the 1652 Country’ (1993b). He shows how a more general interest in the area arose towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the history of Quakerism began to be seriously researched. It then gained momentum at the tercentenary of Fox’s birth in 1924 and led to visits being given the appellation of ‘pilgrimage’ in 1930. Pilgrimages of young people, older pupils from Quaker schools, were organized from 1930 and, apart from the war years, have continued until today.

The first striking thing about these pilgrimages is the multiplicity of sites. There is no single shrine, no one outstanding place. There is Pendle Hill, where Fox had a vision of people needing his message; Firbank Fell, where he preached to a thousand Westmoreland Seekers; Lancaster Castle, where Fox and several early Friends were held in jail; a room in a farmhouse at Preston Patrick, which was used for the trials of many Quakers; Swarthmore Hall, the home of Margaret Fell, the ‘Mother of Quakerism’; and a number of old Meeting Houses and burial grounds. There are some memorabilia: at Brigflatts, a Meeting House dating from 1675, there is the slice of the yew tree under which Fox preached in Sedbergh, alongside a copy of Basil Bunting’s poem *Brigflatts*, presented and signed by the

author. Bunting was a member of the Meeting in his youth and again in later life, having witnessed to Quaker testimony by being a conscientious objector during the war. At Swarthmore there is Fox's Bible, and at Preston Patrick, manuscripts relating to the trials. It is a basic tenet of Quakerism that the Spirit is not found in any one person, and that God does not dwell in 'steeple-houses', but can be experienced everywhere and in every age. Friends do not endow these places and objects with magical qualities, but regard them as an opportunity, a stimulus, for reflection.

For Angus Winchester, an opportunity for reflection is one of the major reasons for joining a Quaker pilgrimage:

To come on a pilgrimage as a member of a Quaker group involves both an element of retreat from the cares of everyday life, a concentrated *period of reflection* and an *experience of fellowship* as we live together with our fellow pilgrims and share *the retracing of Fox's footsteps*. (1993a, my emphasis)

Winchester, a historian, appreciates the separation from his environment to enjoy a 'liminoid' period, where he can reflect on the meaning of the past for his life in the present, and during this period he experiences *communitas* with other pilgrims, who are also away from their everyday activities and their local Friends' Meeting.

The 1652 Country is not the only area pilgrims focus on. An international Quaker Adult Pilgrimage was organized in 1993, beginning in London with a visit to Friends House and Bunhill Fields, where George Fox is buried. Then the pilgrims proceeded to Jordans, William Penn's grave and the site of a Quaker village experiment (see Warner 1921), and then to the Midlands, Fox's birthplace at Fenny Drayton, Bourneville, and Woodbrooke College; and finally to the 1652 Country, following John Woolman's last journey from Brigflatts to his grave in York. The information leaflet states: 'It a strenuous programme and parts of it are physically demanding.' So a period of retreat and reflection is not the only component of a Quaker pilgrimage. In addition to the exertions of the journey, Friends of different traditions will worship together and also seek 'to understand how the experiences, insights and witness of our spiritual forbears relate to us and to the needs of our own times'.

Young Friends have not been restricted to the pilgrimages arranged by schools to the 1652 Country. *The Friend* of 4 October 1996 carried a report of an International Youth Pilgrimage organized by the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), written by a participant. Twenty-four young people from five different countries and five leaders met in New York. The places of interest were those connected with the lives of William Penn, John Woolman and Mary Dyer (a seventeenth-century martyr to the cause). Historic sites and old Meeting Houses were visited, but in addition the pilgrims learned about the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century 'separations' or schisms in American Quakerism. They gained knowledge of the present-day work of the Quaker United Nations Office and also

spent four days working in soup kitchens and on other Quaker initiatives. Worship was shared as a group, but also with local Friends of different traditions, that is, those using programmed worship as distinct from the British silent Meeting. During a month of varied activity 'we were able', the participant reports, 'to create a loving, supportive community where every individual was accepted and nurtured' (ibid.: 21–2).

A participant in a similar Youth Pilgrimage in 1985 recalls, twelve years later, a similar experience: 'The weeks of the Pilgrimage were filled with pain and testing, joy and listening and a coming together of understanding and love that I will never forget' (*The Friend*, 22 August 1997: 10). The experience of programmed worship, that is, one including hymns, readings, and prearranged ministry, was one of 'pain and testing': the ordeal of the pilgrimage lay not in the rigours of travel but in the confrontation of opposing viewpoints and customs.

In both these cases of Youth Pilgrimage, a fellowship resembling the *communitas* as discerned by Turner appears to have been achieved. The young people experienced 'direct, immediate and total confrontation' (Turner and Turner 1978: 133) with Quakers of very different backgrounds, and nevertheless a 'loving, supportive community' had been formed and a 'feeling of trust and security built up'.

How was this achieved? The young people were temporarily freed from the constraints of their own traditions, their familiar surroundings, and usual fellow worshippers—in short, from the environment where habitual behaviour becomes ingrained and intolerance of difference can be fostered. This freedom can be compared with freedom 'from hierarchical roles and statuses', which is essential before *communitas* can arise spontaneously (Eade and Sallnow 1991: 4).

The young participant on the 1996 pilgrimage records that he found returning to the world very painful, but goes on to say that he was determined to 'keep a piece of the pilgrimage living in my life' (*The Friend*, 4 October 1996: 21). And one part of his experience that he found particularly significant was that 'understanding between the different branches of Quakerism was vitally important for the survival and growth of the Society around the world' (ibid.). The pilgrim had realized that the world-wide community of Quakers was important for the spiritual and material life of the individual Meetings and indeed of the individual member. Curiously, the creation of spontaneous, temporary fellowship between those of opposing views, i.e. *communitas*, proved to be a means of affirming and strengthening the already existing structure of global Quakerism, i.e. the community. The strengthening of the latter was achieved by providing the opportunity, through study and contact, to understand and accept different traditions.

One activity which plays a prominent part in the Youth Pilgrimages is study, not only of the historical roots and 'separations', but also of present-day concerns. Study and the linking of historical with contemporary problems and initiatives is not a part of traditional pilgrimages.

The study ingredient is also found in adult groups. In *Quaker News* for Autumn 1997, Tom Taylor reports on the FWCC Triennial held in July at Selly Oak, Birmingham. Around 600 Friends attended, from 60 Yearly Meetings,² i.e. from different areas of the world, making it a truly international gathering. Discussion of contemporary concerns took up most of the time, but as the caption to a photograph of a group at Firbank Fell states, 'A Pilgrimage to the 1652 Country was arranged'. The report refers to the whole event as a study tour. A similar photograph of Quakers at Firbank Fell, this time members of the Britain Yearly Meeting assembled to discuss the current business affairs of the Society, appeared in the July issue of *Quaker News*.

Another international gathering, the first International Conference of Quaker Women at Woodbrooke in 1990 organized to discuss contemporary problems, included visits to Swarthmore and Lancaster Castle. The Hall, Janet Scott reported, 'gave a sense of family and shared ancestry to the international, polyglot family of visitors', while 'Lancaster struck other chords'—those heard in nightmares, the sufferings of early Quakers (Trevett 1997: 113, 114). A feeling of *communitas* among strangers is engendered by a journey to places where a common past is commemorated, giving rise to an emotional experience, which then provides the basis of inherited values needed for the group to study common concerns.

A pilgrimage of a different kind is described in an article in *The Friend* entitled 'Pilgrims and Partners' (*The Friend*, 4 May 1998: 15). It asks, 'Does a pilgrimage have to focus on traditional 'holy' places?' The fortnight tour of the Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan by twenty-four Quakers was billed as a 'study tour'. Their journey included observations of natural history, visits to ancient sites, a study of peace-making activities, inter-faith dialogue, visits to Quaker schools, and a garden for children. At one historical site, Qana (Cana) of Galilee, the Friends found their silent worship imbued with the knowledge of the tragic bombing there of the United Nations Organization building and a hospital. At one modern site they saw a school which was a testimony to faithful Friends who had kept it going through twenty years of civil war, and the garden in Lebanon which was planned as a place for children to play safe from land-mines. The final comment in the report reads: 'Yes, it was a study tour, but also a pilgrimage in which we felt a sense of awe and wonder' (ibid.). What the Quakers experienced is usual among pilgrims, but what distinguishes it from Catholic, Islamic, or Hindu pilgrimages is the linking of the experience with contemporary concerns, events, and activities around the world, and the direct approach to other faiths.

During the years 1996 to 1998, five advertisements appeared in *The Friend* suggesting that Friends might be interested in an 'International Pilgrimage, an op-

² Each country, or State in the USA, has a Yearly Meeting to discuss the business affairs of the Society. The Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) is the Yearly Meeting for the whole of the British Isles. Friends from the local Monthly Meetings (MM) attend in order to raise issues important for the Society and for the world.

portunity for dialogue, sightseeing and spiritual exploration' by visiting Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh sites in India and Nepal. From December 1999 to January 2000 Ben Pink Dandelion proposed to lead a 'study tour' called 'In the Footsteps of Gandhi', who, as the advertisement states, is honoured as 'one of the greatest peacemakers the world has ever known' (*The Friend*, 30 October 1998: 23), and whose Ashram the leader considered a worthy place at which to celebrate the millennium. No doubt Dandelion would balk at the idea that he was venerating 'sacred' places or 'holy' persons, yet his envisaged experience bears some resemblance to that of pilgrims to Catholic sites. The important difference lies in the proclaimed aim of study, the study of one man's contribution to an activity which is one of the main testimonies of Quakerism, that of peacemaking, and also the multicultural, inter-faith aspect of the expedition.

The Jubilee Peace Pilgrimage from Liverpool to Cape Town in 1998, retracing the journey of slavery as 'a living prayer for a world free from racism', was led by Buddhists, but it also attracted support from Quakers (*The Friend*, 7 August 1998: 15). Some walked part of the way sharing in joint worship, while others offered hospitality to the pilgrims. Witness against racism as well as against war is a testimony to the message of Fox—to seek and answer 'that of God in everyone'.

A few Quakers took part in the pilgrimage from Canterbury to Londonderry in 1997. Although a Quaker expressed her interest in the various people and places met on the way, she finally commented: 'I never found an opportunity to share my own spiritual journey', and 'I failed as an "outreach" worker' (*The Friend*, 22 August 1997: 14). The 'living prayer' of the Jubilee Pilgrimage is a witness to Quaker values: the idea of a pilgrimage as an opportunity for 'outreach' is more. The word 'outreach' instead of 'mission' for spreading the message of Quakerism avoids the overtones of pressurizing evangelism, which is unacceptable to Quaker minds: they never proselytize. Nevertheless, 'outreach' is an attempt to express the message in the hope that it may, in the words of Fox, 'speak to the condition' of the hearers, and hopefully result in more members of the Society.

The association of mission with pilgrimage is not new: the Celtic monks who set out to preach the gospel referred to themselves as *peregrini*. From the earliest days many Friends have 'Travelled in the Ministry'. A Quaker pilgrimage was proposed for July 1999 with a small group of pilgrims walking from Firbank Fell to Canterbury,³ where the Quaker Summer Gathering⁴ was held. The organizer sees the pilgrimage as

³ This and the 'In the Footsteps of Gandhi' pilgrimage both took place as planned.

⁴ A Summer Gathering has been organized every four years since 1986 by the BYM as a less formal meeting of Quakers. No business is carried out, but topics concerned with experience and witness are discussed and social events arranged.

a journey in faith through two dimensions. One, through time, starting at the sites of the beginning of the Society, passing through other landmarks to reach the embodiment of present-day Quakerism in the Summer Gathering...the second through space, visiting as many Meetings as we can on the route to share the Society's Testimonies, and worshipping with as many people as possible. We believe that we can create links across the whole of BYM, to be a spiritual stimulus wherever it goes, and by its presence, reach a wider public as it progresses. (Evans 1998)

The organizer notes that they will need from BYM or Meeting for Sufferings⁵ a Minute to entitle the walkers to 'Travel in the Ministry'. The theme of the Summer Gathering is 'A Community on the Move'. Each day is to begin with a 'Tale' by a speaker telling of his or her spiritual journey or their experience of witnessing to Quaker testimonies, thus evoking the concept of pilgrimage by recalling Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

This description of the proposed pilgrimage exhibits interesting correspondences with traditional ritual: contacts will be made with the beginnings of the religious movement, with both places and people; it will be on foot; worship at special places will form an integral part of the enterprise. Again the concept of a journey through time and space is basic to much ritual. Present-day Christians travel to the Holy Land to follow in the footsteps of the Founder from Bethlehem to Galilee and then to Jerusalem, finally to walk the Via Dolorosa and on to the supposed site of the tomb. For those who cannot travel to Israel and Palestine the journey is followed through the Church calendar, while the walk along the Via Dolorosa is transformed into the liturgy of the Stations of the Cross. Quakers, on principle, take no account of 'Times and Seasons' and therefore have no Church calendar, but here in the proposed pilgrimage they are creating an event which follows the origins and development of their own religious community. They will follow the route of the Friends from the north-west 1652 Country, who travelled in 1654 to spread the message to London and the south of England.

Travelling in the Ministry and the development of the Society in the world has always been the outward, visible part of Quakerism. The invisible part is the spiritual journey of the individual. Quakers are not the only religious group to regard life as a pilgrimage, but the word and concept figure largely in their writings and spoken ministry. The writing of a spiritual journal, taking Fox's *Journal* as their inspiration, has always been encouraged and today is becoming popular again, as is evidenced by the organizing of 'workshops' for 'Spiritual Journalling'. These journals speak of the writer's spiritual experience and the events which give rise to them, as well as to the difficulties of witnessing to the Quaker message. A Quaker life is both a mystical experience, with immediate insights into truth and eternal values, and also a compulsion to express this experience to the world. These two

⁵ Meeting for Sufferings is the standing deliberate and decision-making body of the BYM.

elements sit uncomfortably together, since silence, stillness and withdrawal are essential for the mystical experience, while expression and outreach demand speech, movement, and contact with the world. Here we find two poles of a dichotomy with which the movement has struggled in various ways down the centuries. A Quaker pilgrimage, the expression of each pilgrim's life journey and of the Quaker community's development and growth, provides an instance of pilgrimage as 'exteriorized mysticism' (Turner and Turner 1978: 7)—an apt ritual, then, for such a Society.

The dichotomy between mystical experience and outreach is not the only paradox in Quakerism. There has also been a tension between the personal and the corporate. Individual insights, claimed as the unmediated respiration of the Spirit, led, from the seventeenth until the end of the nineteenth century, to the 'Separations' or schisms in the movement. Divisions are a feature of American Quakerism today, and it was only in 1967 that the Fritchley Remnant in England ceased to be separate.⁶ The separations that threatened to divide the movement in the seventeenth century were in part avoided by Fox's 'Gospel Order', which included the removal of the hat during vocal prayer in Meetings for worship—in other words, a ritual action. From the accounts cited above, we see that the pilgrimage is both a personal experience 'of awe and wonder', 'a retreat from cares', or a 'period of reflection', and at the same time an experience of fellowship which bridges belief and custom. In England a journey which includes worship at a number of different Meetings means that the travellers experience the minor but still significant differences between them. They still feel able to worship as members of one Society. It is not just any journey, but one with a religious purpose, a pilgrimage, a ritual, which helps to alleviate the tension between the personal and the corporate.

In addition, and important in understanding the particular style of Quaker pilgrimage, there is the conflict between tradition and the reinterpretation of the Quaker message. The Quaker view of creeds is that they are an attempt to express the inexpressible in terms limited to a certain time in history, for the Spirit leads on into a greater understanding of truth. As the Quaker *Book of Discipline* has developed over two hundred years, some passages deemed at an earlier date to be important for Friends' reflection and enlightenment have been erased (see Thomas 1993). Each passage is given its date of composition as a reminder that ideas and experiences have to be understood in context. This attitude to the past in part explains Quakers' ambiguous position towards pilgrimage. The traditional pilgrimage is essentially a veneration of past things, people and events. The commemorative factor is still much in evidence in Quaker pilgrimages as the participants 'walk in Fox's footsteps' or 'in the footsteps of Gandhi' or follow 'Woolman's last journey'. But all these pilgrims have a purpose for today: they

⁶ The Fritchley Remnant was a small Meeting which opposed any relaxation of the rules of the Society as they existed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

declare it as their intention to apply their experiences and insights to the 'needs of our times'. For the ritual to be acceptable to friends, it needs not only to be simplified, shorn of images, crosses, and holy shrines, but also to express their present-day beliefs and concerns.

In adapting an ancient ritual, Quakers have produced a pilgrimage meaningful for their religious life in the post-modern age. Charles Jencks, approaching post-modernism as an architect, considers that it has 'a concern with meaning, continuity and symbolism' (1996: 46), while multiculturalism and the idea of plurality are basic features of the movement (*ibid.*). The weakness of the movement, he notes, is that it gives rise to social insecurity. The tendency to fragmentation in the Society in the late twentieth century is a cause for concern among its members and has led to much self-questioning as to the meaning of the message and the search for a unifying principle. There are an astonishing number of groups in so small a Society, ranging from long-standing committees concerned with the peace testimony, education, or social concern, to more recent groups such as Quaker Green Concern and Quaker Lesbian and Gay Fellowship, and to the more theological New Foundation Fellowship and the Quaker Universalist Group—the two extremes of Quaker belief. In her Swarthmore Lecture of 1997, Christine Trevett presses for a renewed study of the lives and teaching of the founding members. Dandelion, citing their way of conducting business—no voting, a nominations committee, use of special phrases—suggests that 'the only glue left' is 'the Quaker way of doing things' (*The Friend*, 26 June 1998: 13). Peter Collins suggests that 'plaining', the substitution of elaborate ritual by very simple symbols and an unostentatious lifestyle, is deeply ingrained in Quakerism, and this forms a powerful bond. 'Plaining', he writes, 'is a polysemic practice through which Quakers with different theological inclinations can identify themselves as united' (1996: 287). The Quaker pilgrimage can be added to Collins' examples of 'plained activity'.

The Quaker pilgrimage can only be a partial answer to the Society's need for a unifying activity. Apart from the Youth Pilgrimage, which began as part of young Friends' education—and leaving aside the residential Summer Gathering—the pilgrimages attract no crowds, and most participants act on their own initiative. Nor are pilgrimages the only activity undertaken to revive the memory of early Quakers and the world in which the movement had its origins. At a 'William Penn Weekend' in 1996, Quakers rehearsed the 'Penn-Meade Trial', perhaps the first in England where the jury asserted its right not to convict on the instruction of the judge. In 1997, the 350th anniversary of the Putney Debates, this event was acted out with live debates on comparable issues of today, ones of international and global concern. Some local Meetings celebrate their own tercentenaries or other anniversaries.

Other Quakers, however, are unhappy about marking any times and seasons. Complaints were voiced when *The Friend* produced special articles for the Christmas issue, whereas others felt that Good Friday and Easter should have been

acknowledged in the periodical. For some Quakers even the general handshake between worshippers after the elders have signalled the end of the hour of silence is a creeping-in of ritual to be resisted. This ambiguity in Quaker attitudes is expressed in a short poem by Kevin Bamford in a booklet entitled *Place of Pilgrimage: A Brigflatts Anthology*.

Brigflatts! Another name to conjure with!
 We walked there on a summer's day, that, too,
 A kind of pilgrimage, though we would all
 Deny the implication of the word.
 What present could we take away with us
 From such a place as this? No souvenir
 No holy relic, image of a saint,
 No George Fox bookmark, no Valiant Sixty pen!
 A sense of atmosphere perhaps, conferred
 By knowledge of the years of worship there.
 Yes, that! And an appreciation of
 The simple Quaker style. But most of all
 An image of the dog-pen by the stair.⁷

Place of Pilgrimage is available to visitors at the Meeting House. This anthology contains brief accounts, dating from 1684 to 1987, of visits and the feelings aroused in the visitors, as well as of events and activities taking place at the Meeting House. Some other Meeting Houses and sites, such as Swarthmore Hall and Brant Broughton village in Lincolnshire, offer booklets on the history of the place and picture postcards of the building. But there are no profit-making souvenirs and, as I have noted above, few memorabilia. Nothing is offered that could be a keepsake.

In his analysis of tourism, Nelson Graburn suggests: 'Souvenirs are tangible evidences of travel that are often shared with family and friends, but what one really brings back are memories and experiences' (1989: 33). The objects are not just proof of visits but symbols of the emotions aroused and the meaning of travel for the tourist. In their rejection of souvenirs as symbols of their visits, Quakers are true to their founder's rejection of symbolic objects to express religious experience: their memories do not need to be awakened by artefacts. Furthermore, their emphasis on simplicity would deter Friends from buying unnecessary things which only help to use up the world's resources.

It might be suggested that, in showing such a growing interest in pilgrimages, Quakers are just falling in with a contemporary fashion. Adopting something be-

⁷ This poem, 'Brigflatts', is reprinted here by courtesy of *The Friend*.

cause it is in fashion is quite contrary to Quaker behaviour. Their interest in the 1652 Country began a hundred years ago, and the events were known as pilgrimages from 1930 onwards. Certainly the rate of interest has accelerated, keeping pace with the growth of tourism, which has developed through ease of travel and increased time for leisure activities.

Tourism has been considered a subject worthy of serious academic research since a symposium convened by Valene Smith was held in Mexico in conjunction with the American Anthropological Association in 1974. This was followed by the publication of *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism* (Smith 1989). Researchers found the subject complex. Theron Nunez lists 'religious tourism' as one kind of tourism among many (1989: 272). This would include attendance at religious festivals as well as pilgrimage and missionary journeys. Nelson Graburn sees tourism itself as a symbolic activity: 'Tourism is pre-eminently a secular ritual [which] in many contemporary societies fulfils functions once met by sacred (or more precisely supernatural) rituals' (quoted in Lett 1989: 276). He clearly equates 'religious' with 'supernatural' and applies 'sacred' to activities, including tourism, which are performed by human beings to add meaning and embellishment to their lives. To find this meaning and embellishment, tourists engage in many kinds of journey. The most adventurous are explorers of remaining wildernesses; others travel far across the world to experience contact with peoples and cultures different from those met with at home; others pursue their interest in the past by joining historical tours, sometimes in the home country, sometimes among ancient sites such as those in Greece or Egypt; even larger numbers engage in recreational activity ranging from organized sporting events to sunbathing in warmer climes. In his article 'Tourism: The Sacred Journey', Graburn claims that tourism, like all other leisure pursuits, takes place in non-ordinary, 'sacred' time, as opposed to working time, or ordinary 'profane' time (1989: 21–36).

Other scholars disagree with this approach and look at tourism from the point of view of its impact on the culture and economy of the host societies (Lett 1989: 276; see also Greenwood 1977). Another writer regards it as an activity that can only flourish when sanctioned by society (Smith 1989: 1–3). When it is acceptable to the economy of the community for some time to be taken away from home and work, and when income is sufficient for a part to be used for non-essential purposes, then tourism is justified.

Pilgrimages undoubtedly display elements common to some types of tourism. Pilgrims feel that they add meaning and depth to their lives by taking part in the ritual. Their participation is sanctioned, if not obliged, by their religion: Quakers, for instance, need a Minute entitling them to 'Travel in the Ministry' if they intend the pilgrimage to be part of outreach. Some Quaker pilgrimages, as we have seen, involve long journeys, to America, India and Nepal, Lebanon and Syria. Such expenditure of money and time can only be legitimized in the eyes of Quakers if the travel is being undertaken for a serious purpose, be it a search for understanding

and enlightenment, or an attempt to help solve some of the Society's problems. That some pilgrimages have a considerable effect on the economy of the sites venerated cannot be denied, at Lourdes or Knock, for example. Little impact has been made on the places of Quaker pilgrimage because numbers are small. Nor are Quaker sites tourist attractions, though the Tourist Information Office in Sedbergh explained how to reach 'Fox's Pulpit' when I enquired. However, the simple plaque recording Fox's visit there, on the side of a huge boulder at the top of a windy hill, would hardly attract the ordinary tourist. In contrast, no one at the tourist office in Hawkshead had any knowledge of the quietly impressive seventeenth-century Meeting House in Colthouse. Valene Smith speaks of 'the magic of sharing a tourist activity', which is strong and lasting when 'the participants share similar value systems': she does not restrict the value systems to religious ones. As we have seen, 'religious tourism' or pilgrimage creates a strong feeling of fellowship. She also records that: 'A guide in India expressed the hope that domestic tourism by Indians travelling within their own subcontinent will eventually help break down the language disputes and provincialism that continue to fracture government efforts towards national consolidation' (1989: 3). Thus one type of tourism may, it is hoped, promote a kind of unity in the nation similar to that aspired to by Quakers through their inter-regional and international pilgrimages.

In February 1999, members of a London Meeting organized a historical tour around Shoreditch, led by a Quaker lecturer in local history who was used to 'taking Quaker pilgrims around sites in the city of London'. The walkers stopped at places connected with the lives of Quakers who were active in such causes as temperance, anti-slavery, poverty, crime, and education, and whose work proved of enduring benefit to the area. Just two-thirds of the 104 people who took part were Quakers. One of these wrote: 'The interest in local history shouldn't be underestimated as a form of outreach, and people who came on the walk from the Shoreditch Preservation Society care about what goes on here and now in the city, just as Quakers do, and we're glad of the chance to "net-work"' (*The Friend*, 5 March 1999: 14). The tour finished at Bunhill Fields, where 12,000 Quakers are buried, as well as Fox himself. Here we have an instance of Quakers using the contemporary interests of the wider public and linking them with a commemoration of their own past and their present-day concerns. Historical tourism provides the opportunity for both Quakers' own religious needs and outreach.

In 1998 the Canadian Government saw that tourism could have desirable ends—apart from the obvious economic ones—when they organized a conference announced as 'Tourism: A Vital Force for Peace' (Smith 1989: 4). It is interesting to note that a Quaker, Valerie Flessati, has devised a 'Peace Trail through London'. This includes the Gandhi memorial and the Japanese Peace Pagoda, as well as seven other sites having associations with a variety of people who have furthered the cause of disarmament, conscientious objection, and opposition to war. The leaflet produced is intended for tourists and visitors who might otherwise miss

these inspirational buildings and memorials in London squares and gardens. Flesati is using tourism to promote the Quaker Peace Testimony. The trail involves 'a good walk' and bus rides: it is a journey based on a religious or humanist value system, a kind of pilgrimage for all, appealing to that of God in everyone. In both the Peace Trail and the Walk round Shoreditch, Quakers are taking advantage of tourism to pursue their own goals.

Whether we regard pilgrimage as one kind of tourism or see the latter as a modern replacement for the age-old ritual, what Friends are creating is unique, a Quaker 'peculiarity'. In the Quaker pilgrimage we find a 'plained' pilgrimage, but still a pilgrimage, a commemorative rite, a journey where pilgrims form a fellowship or *communitas*, or where existing national or global communities can be strengthened by promoting understanding between those of different theological approaches and alternative ways of worship, and where there is space for reflection on a common past and essential fundamental tenets. This ritual, itself multifaceted and expressing the pluralism within the Society, together with its readiness to develop inter-faith relations and embracing multiculturalism, is a truly heterogeneous activity which can surely merit the description of 'post-modern'.

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