

THE *JOURNAL* OF GEORGE FOX: A TECHNOLOGY OF PRESENCE

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ABSTRACT

Critics have debated at length whether George Fox's *Journal* is primarily to be understood within the tradition of seventeenth-century autobiographical writing, or as an historical account of the early Quaker movement. This article suggests that this is a false dichotomy, and argues instead that the *Journal* might be reconceived as a 'technology of presence': that is, in its attention both to the figure of Fox and to the detailed chronicling of time and place, its principal narrative impetus was to record, demonstrate and reproduce the presence of the returned and indwelling Christ. The *Journal* thus constitutes, in its form and narrative procedure, an enactment of core Quaker belief.

KEYWORDS

George Fox's *Journal*, early Quakerism, history, subjectivity, journey, temporalities

And y^e great Journall of my Life, Sufferings, Travills and Imprisonments they may bee put together that Lye in papers and y^e Little Journall Books they may bee printed together in a Book (Fox 1911: II. 347-48).

In these instructions of 1685 for the publication of his writings, George Fox calls his account of his 'Life, Sufferings, Travills and Imprisonments' a 'Journall'. Seven years later, the Second Day Morning Meeting, the editorial committee charged with seeing the first edition of the *Journal* into print, tacitly approved Fox's choice of word, agreeing to entitle the first published edition, 'The History of G.F.'s Journall and Progress in y^e Lord's Work...' (Fox 1911: I. xiii). It appeared in 1694, transcribed and edited by Thomas Ellwood, as *A Journal or Historical Account of the Life, Travels, Sufferings, Christian Experiences and Labour of Love in the Work of the Ministry of that Ancient, Eminent and Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, George Fox*. Ever since, the resulting account has been known simply as Fox's *Journal*.¹

More recently, however, critics have been exercised by the mismatch between the commonly perceived characteristics of a 'journal' and the text so designated by Fox and his editors. Geoffrey Nuttall's introduction to Nickalls's 1952 edition argues:

It is not a journal at all in the strict sense of an account written, if not daily, at least shortly after each incident described, when the future is still dark. It is, rather, an autobiography or book of memoirs, written in retrospect in order to illustrate the power of the Lord as shown in his servant's 'Sufferings and Passages'... (Nuttall 1952: xxx).

Fox's recent biographer, H. Larry Ingle, concurs; this, he agrees, is a 'lengthy memoir, which his literary executors mistitled a *Journal*' (Ingle 1993b: 38). Others are not so confident in their re-ascriptions, finding it easier to say what the *Journal* is not, generically speaking, than what it is. David Boulton suggests that it 'was not really a journal, nor even an autobiography' (Boulton 1993: 144), and John Knott characterises it through dissociation:

Any discussion of Fox's *Journal* should recognize that it was not conceived as either a contemporaneous record of daily happenings or a spiritual autobiography of the sort that became popular among nonconformists in seventeenth-century England, although it has elements of both (Knott 1993: 231).

Some critics resolve the problem by reading the *Journal* in the broad context of the extraordinary upsurge of spiritual self-writing of the second half of the seventeenth century, whether conversion narrative, spiritual autobiography or spiritual journal. Nigel Smith, the *Journal's* latest editor, simply calls it 'a classic of spiritual and autobiographical writing' (Smith 1998: xi) and, rather than seeking to corral it into an ill-fitting generic location, offers a nuanced analysis of just what gives the *Journal* its distinctive character and texture. John Knott, too, places the *Journal* within a broad tradition of spiritual writing, reading it as closest to Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, and to the Acts of the Apostles (Knott 1993: 233-35).

Other critics identify the *Journal* as a narrative that traces the genesis and development of the Quaker movement. Ingle concludes that by the time he was dictating what would become the *Journal*, Fox was concerned to write history, and history of a particular kind:

it is obvious that when Fox worked the archives he wanted to make sure that the earlier enthusiasm and radicalism surrounding the movement was deemphasized and explained... Fox thus set out to put the most moderate face on what had been, in the turbulent days before 1660, a force for fundamental change within English society (Ingle 1993a: 32).

Thomas Corns dissents from this rather monolithic interpretative standpoint. Fox, Corns suggests, 'may have sought to offer a sanitized version of Quakerism more suitable in the puritan winter of the 1660s and early 1670s. But any such tendency is unsustainable' (Corns 1995: 110). Part of the reason for this, Corns concludes, can be found in the composite nature of the *Journal*—the fact that the narrative portion is interspersed with many interpolated documents originating from the moments on which Fox was later reflecting. Geoffrey Nuttall expressed greater exasperation with the kind of argument that sees Fox as a manipulative historian:

In some quarters at present it is the fashion to show antipathy to George Fox as self-important, and to play down his *Journal* as selective and doctored history. This is unfair, as well as ill-considered. Fox's *Journal* makes no claim to be a history of early Quakerism. It is a genuine journal, with a journal's self-centredness. The history was left to William Penn (Nuttall 1995: 113).

In refusing to read the *Journal* as history, Nuttall recuperates the text as a 'genuine journal'—a conclusion in tension, interestingly, with his earlier exclusion of it from that category (see quotation above). In so doing, he finds a 'self-centredness' in the text that other readers have found so signally lacking, thereby bringing the spotlight back on to Fox himself, rather than on to the movement. Like Corns, Nuttall finds plenty of evidence of the kind of enthusiasm that Ingle saw as being systematically excised from the *Journal*. Reading the *Journal* as 'history' might resolve one set of critical arguments, but seems at the same time to open up further disagreement as to the emphasis and character of the history thereby produced.

Journal, autobiography, memoir or history: no term, it seems, is compendious enough to accommodate the complexity and singularity of Fox's text. The choice facing readers and critics seems to be either to opt for one of these terms, while acknowledging its inadequacy to the task, or to refuse all of them, and to define the *Journal* by distancing it from all these literary types. One solution to this dilemma would be to accept Corns's verdict on the text as *sui generis*, and focus instead on reading it on its own terms, whatever those might be (Corns 1995: 110). In this article, however, we seek to refocus the debate in a different way. Instead of choosing between Fox's text as a memoir of a self or a history of the movement, we begin from the understanding that it is both, and focus on the textual relationship between the subjectivity at the core of the account, and the equally prominent chronicle of events; that is, we shall analyse the text as both memoir *and* history, and ask what the relationship might be between a journal and a history, and between a self and a movement. In so doing, we propose a rather different approach to the problem of the *Journal*'s generic elusiveness by suggesting a return to, and careful scrutiny of, the text as 'journal'. Through paying attention to the etymology and history of the term itself, and taking account of its terms of reference and its scope, we propose to navigate and reframe the critical debates about the *Journal* and the dynamic it generates between the 'self' of Fox and the movement of which he became leader.

The figure of George Fox provides both the focus and the point of view of the *Journal*. The narrative proceeds from the circumstances of his birth and family to his travels, and restricts itself relatively consistently, though not unremittingly, to recounting events and encounters as witnessed and experienced by Fox himself. It is just such an organisational principle—a narrative whose boundaries, perspectives and perceptions are set through reference to a first-person narrator—that is at the heart of the current conceptualisation of the journal or diary as a 'technology of the self': that is, a site for the production, maintenance and oversight of the self (Foucault 1984: 341; Webster 1996: 40). The diary of Fox's contemporary, Samuel Pepys, is often taken as the instance *par excellence* of this kind of self-reckoning and mediated self-production: Claire Tomalin calls the diary Pepys's 'rhapsody on himself', revolving round 'that adored, although often uncomfortable' sense of self (Tomalin 2003:

xxxviii). Its open-endedness and steady dailiness have made it a touchstone text for investigations of textual self-production in the seventeenth century.² Fox's *Journal*, however, presents nothing approaching the kind of recognisably, and appealingly, modern figuring of selfhood or identity—self-absorbed, perhaps self-deluded, but also self-reflexive—to be found in Pepys's *Diary*. Fox's might be the controlling subjectivity of the *Journal*, in that the narrative is organised around *his* life, sufferings, 'travills' and imprisonments, but the emphasis falls firmly on the itinerary itself—places visited, people encountered, sufferings endured, deliverances enjoyed—rather than on the self produced through these events. None of the characteristically nuanced, fleeting, often tormented and always minutely observed shifts in self-perception that we find in Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, Trapnel's *A Legacy for Saints* (1654) or Baxter's *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (1696) are to be found here. Instead, we find accounts such as this:

And from thence I passt with an olde man {James Dickisons}: y^t was convinced of ye truth y^t day & dyed in ye truth: to his house & from thence I came to James Taylors {of Newton in Cartmell in Lancasheere}: & on ye first day I went to one preist Camelfords chappell & after hee had donne I began to speake ye worde of life to y^m & Camelforde was in such a rage & such a fret & soe peevish y^t hee had noe patiens to heare but stirred uppe ye rude multitude & they rudely haled mee out & strucke mee & punched mee & tooke mee & threw mee headelonge over a stone wall: but blessed be the Lorde his power preserved mee {[ye kirke warden] was one Jo: Knipe whome ye Lorde after cutt off whoe threwe mee doune headelonge over ye wall} (Fox 1911: I. 46).

Fox shifts from being the itinerant subject, who passes, comes and goes, to becoming the motionless centre of the flurry of hostility and violence emanating from Camelford and the 'rude multitude'. It is they, indeed, who become the active subjects of this episode, and Fox the passive object of their hostility. His appearance before them excites their violence, but he is rendered, paradoxically, an absence around which the narrative energy eddies. If the figure of Fox is eclipsed, however, his point of view is not. The description of Camelford and 'the rude multitude' is manifestly Fox's own: partial, absolute and judgmental. Rather than clearly originating with himself, his perspective inheres in the words attaching to his opponents (rage, fret, peevish, rudely), thereby attaining an authority and ostensible objectivity. This is underlined and even given a divine sanction by the closing remark noting the subsequent 'cutting off' of John Knipe. Far from producing the kinds of interiority associated with the first-person accounts of Pepys or Bunyan, Fox's narrative is characterised by a thoroughgoing exteriority, produced by a persistent absence of introspection and by the ascription of emotions and activity to others. It is the testimony of a witnessing subject, but it is not an analysis of how the events witnessed impacted on that subject. We learn less about Fox's spiritual experience than we do about Camelford and his parishioners. The Fox of the *Journal* does not, therefore, conform to the narrative model of self as 'subject' of spiritual growth, in which, Tom Webster, observes, 'the authentically godly are, in a sense, always in a state of becoming' (Webster 1996: 55).

There are moments in the text when Fox is more clearly present as narrative agent, but even this does not straightforwardly transform his textual presence from object to subject, but emerges temporarily in addition to it. One such instance occurs in the

account of Fox's 1652 visit to Ulverston, where the authorities did not respond positively to Fox's declarations. He is taken out on to the 'common moss' by the constables and officers, and beaten by them:

they then fell upon mee as aforesaid with there stakes & clubbs & beate mee on my heade & armes & shoulders till they had mased mee & att last I fell doune upon ye wett common: & when I recovered my selfe againe & saw my selfe lying on a watery common & all ye people standing about mee I lay a litle still & ye power of ye Lord sprange through mee & ye eternall refreshinges refreshment mee y^t I stode uppe againe in ye eternall power of God & stretched out my armes amongst y^m all & saide againe with a loude voice strike againe heere is my armes my heade & my cheekes: & there was a mason a rude fellow a professor {caled} hee gave mee a blowe with all his might Just a toppe of my hande as it was stretched out with his walkinge rule staffe: & my hande & arme was soe nummed & bruised y^t I coule not drawe itt in unto mee againe: soe as ye people cryed out hee hath spoiled his hande for ever haveinge any use of it more {& I looket att it in ye love of God & I was in ye love of God to y^m all y^t had persecuted mee} (Fox 1911: I. 58).

In this remarkable narrative, the first-person narrator (as in the previous passage) is initially fully integrated with the object of the officers' violence: they 'mased mee', he writes, '& att last I fell doune'. At this point, a curious splitting of the self occurs, as Fox recovers sufficiently to transcend the bruised body and, separated from it, behold it centre stage of a scene on the common, with the people all around. He is at this point simultaneously present as omniscient (disembodied) and as first-person (embodied) narrator. Narrative agency then returns to the embodied Fox, newly integrated with his transcendent self through the infusion of 'eternall refreshinges' of the Lord's power, which enable him to stand up and challenge his persecutors to strike him again. When his hand is beaten numb, a second moment of dissociation or doubling occurs, as the speaker appears to attain a Christ-like perspective on his hand—'I looket att it in ye love of God & I was in ye love of God to y^m all y^t had persecuted mee'. The double eye, or focus, of this account reveals a double 'I' or articulation. The account encompasses both the abused Fox (the mortal 'I' who expresses suffering) and the triumphant spirit of the truth, which looks over the scene and the text with a view to its impact on readers. Fox as subject is at once the suffering individual, the testifying witness and the omniscient narrator, setting out both the account itself and indications of its divinely endowed significance.

The 'self' of Fox's *Journal* is in some senses, therefore, as omnipresent and controlling as that to be found in Pepys's *Diary* or Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*. It is, however, a different kind of self. Rather than being the subject of spiritual or social growth, the figure of Fox as 'subject' suggests a sense of the self as socially and spiritually subjected (subject *to*), while also governing the point of view and shape of the narrative itself (subject *of*). A trigger for the unfolding narrative, Fox as a paradoxical subject creates a range of different temporal and spatial perspectives within the *Journal*. As we shall argue, these are precisely the result of the specific Quaker conception of the selfhood of the godly and its relationship to 'becoming', to time and history.

Matters of time and history are at stake in a number of ways in Fox's *Journal*, most immediately in the retrospective nature of its composition. The narrative account

which formed the basis of what was first published in 1694 as the *Journal* was dictated by Fox between 1673 and 1675, to his son-in-law Thomas Lower. In the case of the Ulverston episode discussed above, therefore, the effect of distance from the scene of suffering when Fox's hand was beaten may be partly explained by the temporal shift: Fox describes a key moment in 1652 from the standpoint of more than twenty years later and dictates to Lower, a member of the established Quaker movement who records the events. In a very literal sense, the suffering hand is not the hand that writes: Fox, the subjected 'I' who suffers, is recalled by a subject who has been, to a greater or lesser extent, shaped by knowledge of the events of the intervening years, and of how the story ended.³ It is principally the fact that Fox's narrative is not a contemporaneous daily record—what Stuart Sherman calls 'a rigorously continuous and steady serial narrative', characterised by 'simple successiveness', and produced without the benefit of hindsight—that has led critics to draw back from the designation of the text as journal, and to seek to redefine it as autobiography or memoir (Sherman 1996: 33–34). Whether or not this retrospective character debars Fox's text from occupying this category is open to question, since even the undoubted 'steady serial narrative' of Pepys's *Diary* combines its incremental dailiness with regular moments of evaluative retrospection (1996: 58–59). We need to take serious account of the impact of retrospection both on the version of events we are given (the *Journal* as history), and on the narrative structure of the text thereby produced, since multiple points of regression create a complex layering within the text. It is perhaps not sufficient to say that Fox knew how the story ended, and thus shaped his account accordingly; we need more precisely to ask to what extent, and in what ways, the *Journal* is, or is not, end-directed.

The rigorously chronological character of the text's narrative organisation, beginning with Fox's early life and proceeding year by year to the moment of composition, is more complex than it first appears. Although the manuscript pages include dates, which seem to be in Lower's hand, within the narrative itself as well as in the margins, the main indicators of sequence are relational and contingent ('after', 'then'), rather than calibrated against external measures such as calendar or clock. The sequential passing of time is insisted upon, but also non-specific; it is the passage from one moment to the next, and from one place to the next, that is significant, and not the ability to track the route taken or the date on which something occurred. For Friends, the measures of day and month were irrelevant, indicative of mere human or carnal time; instead, the *Journal* refers above all to the internal structure of the week as it related to the godly calendar ('ye first day'; 'a lecture day'), or of the day as it related to natural time ('in ye afternoon'; 'next morninge'; 'att night'). This narrative mode is, of course, in part the result of the account's retrospective composition; twenty or thirty years after the events, Fox's memory would not have allowed him precise recall. This lack of precision is not an impediment to narrative, however; it is the sequence itself, the moving on of time, that is emphasised, the succession of events in time and space, and not their duration, nor the precise, measurable, chronological moments of their passage.

However we account for the lack of chronological precision, it is clear that this has not been prohibitive of reading the *Journal* as history. Historians of Quakerism

continue to rely on it as an indispensable source for the early years of the movement, and indeed the precedent for reading the *Journal* as history was set with its first publication, when William Penn, who wrote the Preface to Ellwood's 1694 edition of the *Journal*, called on readers thus:

To Conclude, Behold the *Testimony* and *Doctrine* of the People called *Quakers!* Behold their *Practice* and *Discipline!* And behold the blessed *Man* and *Men* that were sent of God in this Excellent *Work* and *Service!* All which will be more particularly expressed in the Ensuing *Annals* of the Man of God; which I do most heartily recommend to my *Readers* most serious Perusal (Penn 1694: n.p.).

Penn's phrase the 'Ensuing *Annals* of the Man of God' gives an important key for reading the *Journal* as a particular type of history: it recognises the centrality of the subjectivity of Fox, but also places centre-stage the sequence of events therein recounted. The term 'annals' referred to historical records generally, but more specifically to 'a narrative of events written year by year' (*OED* 1, 2). Hayden White has analysed more precisely what characterises the annals form, and concludes that what distinguishes it from 'chronicle' or 'history' is precisely its *lack* of narrative. It consists, he says, 'only of a list of events ordered in chronological sequence'; these events, set against certain years, are apparently random and unrelated, and there is an 'absence of a principle for assigning importance or significance to events' (White 1987: 5, 11). The absence of narrativity in this record of events is underscored for White by annals' insistent relation to chronological time—this, above all, he suggests, is the ordering principle. Annals neither inaugurate nor conclude, they simply begin and terminate, ungoverned by any sense of a coherent or singular structuring narrative (1987: 8). The sequence of chronological time drives the record, not the 'time of eternity or *kairotic* time', and 'This [chronological] time has no high points or low points; it is, we might say, paratactical and endless' (1987: 8).

It is the contrast between White's definition and analysis of the annals form and the kind of historical record constituted by Fox's *Journal* that is most instructive here. While both are structured through rectilinear sequence and parataxis, it is the relationship of those sequences to different conceptions of time that is significant and, in turn, the consequences of this for the development of a narrative. For White, annals lack a principle for assigning importance to events. Fox's 'annals', however, have an absolutely clear principle for the assigning of significance: namely, the godliness or otherwise of those events; and the touchstone whereby this assay is made is the way in which they impact on Fox himself, or on other Friends. It is this process that transforms Fox's apparent parataxis (unconnected sequence) into a more fundamental hypotaxis (indicative of cause and effect), that translates the random into the ordered. Surprisingly, the closest forerunners of Fox's *Journal* as the history of a religious movement may not be the radical texts of the 1640s but the annals of religious communities, such as convents or monasteries. The illusion of parataxis in accounts of the lives of the nuns of St Clare's, for example, is typical of a religious order that does not presume to know the divine plan into which their daily lives fit but whose accounts are written with a consciousness of *kairotic* time, of being part of eternity (see Forster 1986).

For Fox, the temporal frame of relevance is indeed the ‘time of eternity or *kairotic* time’, rather than chronological or calendar time (*chronos*). The *OED* defines *kairos* as ‘Fullness of time; the propitious moment for the performance of an action or the coming into being of a new state’; and Frank Kermode, drawing on the usage of a number of Christian theologians, summarises the distinction between *chronos* and *kairos*:

chronos is ‘passing time’ or ‘waiting time’—that which, according to Revelation, shall be no more—and *kairos* is the season, a point in time filled with significance, charged with a meaning derived from its relation to the end... The divine plot is the pattern of *kairos* in relation to the End... It is the New Testament that lays the foundation for... the modern distinction between times: the coming of God’s time (*kairos*), the fulfilling of the time (*kairos*—Mark i.15), the signs of the times (Matt. xvi.2,3) as against passing time, *chronos*. The notion of fulfilment is essential; the *kairos* transforms the past, validates Old Testament types and prophecies, establishes concord with origins as well as ends (Kermode 1967: 47–48).

Kairotic or godly time thus figures (or prefigures) the end of time, but also represents its fulfilment in Christ: ‘That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, *even* in him’ (Eph. 1.10). *Kairos* justifies, and ends, the waiting time. *Kairotic* time thus designates a sense of propitious time and ‘timeliness’; it comprises completion in Christ, but also the inauguration of something new; and it brings with it the eradication of boundaries between human and divine, through the ‘gathering’ of all into Christ, and between past and present, in the validation of Old Testament types and prophecies.

This point is underlined by what constitutes Penn’s Preface to the *Journal*: a history of the world from the creation up to the advent of Fox. This, the Preface suggests, is the prehistory to the history that will be found in the *Journal*; it is this that must be understood if the events represented in Fox’s account are to be properly comprehended; it is this that clarifies the ‘fulness of times’ revealed in Fox’s account. Penn’s title to his Preface puts it this way:

A Summary Account of the Divers Dispensations of God to Men, from The Beginning of the World to That of our present Age, by the Ministry and Testimony of his Faithful Servant George Fox, as an Introduction to the ensuing Journal (Penn sig. A^r).

Historical sequence on a grand scale lays the foundations for the fulfilment and conclusion of this sequence in the events of Fox’s life. Godly dispensations can be tracked ‘from The Beginning of the World to... our present Age’. Unlike for the contemporary Fifth Monarchists or Baptists, who were still awaiting the return of King Jesus and the demise of the ungodliness of the current dispensation, for Quakers, ‘a new dispensation of the Spirit’ was already in place (Bailey 1992: 12). King Jesus was *already* returned, as the Inward Light dwelling within each believer. This led, potentially and ultimately, to a quite different relationship to *kairotic* time, because the Inward Light brought with it the possibility of ‘the regaining of Paradise *in the present*’ (Bailey 1992: 20, emphasis added). At the heart of the particular Quaker conception of temporality, then, lay the doctrine of the Inward Light, a doctrine of *presence*; and

this, for Friends, abolished the contrast between *chronos* and *kairos*. As Underwood has argued, rectilinear temporality was superseded: 'the past and future were experienced in the present' (Underwood 1997: 5). For Friends, the present was folded into the past of the primitive church; they were living the experience of the emerging New Testament church. In doing so, they were simultaneously internalising the future, through the second coming of Christ within each believer. The belief that the second coming of Christ (still in the historical future for other radicals such as Fifth Monarchists and Baptists) was taking place in the present, as it had done in the time of the primitive church, through Christ dwelling spiritually within individual Christians, led to a 'fusion of time' for early Friends. Past and future co-existed in a continuous present (Underwood 1997: 4-5). Fox himself indicates the centrality of this understanding of time as a mechanism for differentiating Friends from the ungodliness of other sectarian positions. In 1649, he visited some Ranters in gaol in Coventry, only to find them part of a 'great power of darkness'. To undermine their claims that 'they were God', he demonstrated to them how, in contrast to God's omniscience regarding future as well as present and past, they were defined by ignorance and blasphemy:

Then seeing they said they were God, I asked them, if they knew whether it would rain tomorrow. They said they could not tell. Again, I asked them if they thought they should be always in that condition, or should change, and they answered they could not tell. Then said I unto them, 'God can tell, and God doth not change. You say you are God, and yet you cannot tell whether you shall change or no'. So they were confounded, and quite brought down for the time (Fox 1952: 47).⁴

In spite of the Ranters' refusal to make the blasphemous claim of predicting the future, Fox shows that they are ungodly because, unlike God, they are trapped by the partiality of chronological time. They are literally 'quite brought down for the time', whereas Fox, although he cannot claim God's omniscience, can recognise the existence of a *kairotic* presence that transcends time.

In this Quaker theology of presence, successiveness gives way to a *kairotic* simultaneity of time and of place. What Underwood calls the 'internalization and spiritualization by Quakers of outward historical events' (Underwood 1997: 4) was located in moments and sites of heightened awareness of Christ. It is therefore unsurprising that time and place are closely linked in the *Journal* in, for example, Fox's account of the words he spoke on Firbank Fell:

many olde people y^t went Into ye Chapell & looket out of ye windowes & thought it a strange thinge to see a man to preach on a hill or mountaine & nott in there church as they caled it soe y^t I was made to open to ye people y^t ye steeplehouse & y^t grounde {on which it stoode} was noe more holyer then y^t mountaine...butt Christ was come whoe ended ye temple & ye preists & ye tyths & Christ saide learne of mee & God saide this is my beloved son heare yee him for ye Lord had sent mee with his everlastinge gospell to preach & his worde of life to bringe y^m of all those temples tyths preists & rudiments of ye worlde y^t had gotten uppe since ye Apostles days (Fox 1911: I. 43).

'Christ was come', to Palestine, in the past, but also to the hearts of those that turned to him, in the present. The end presaged in and by the second coming is enacted and

fulfilled in present events and present time, though it abolishes the presence of neither. In the same move, a dissolution is effected of the spatial distinctions between Palestine and Yorkshire, and between holy and profane ground, and of the temporal distinction between the first and the second coming, as well as between Christ and Fox himself ('for ye Lord had sent mee with his everlastinge gospell to preach'). Ultimately, the boundary between inner and outer is called into question:

And I was moved to declare to ye people howe all people in ye fall were from ye image of God & righteousnesse & holynesse: & they was as wells without ye water of life: cloude without ye heavenly raine: ...& like ye mountaines & rockes & crooked & rough ways: soe I exhorted y^m to reade these without and within in there nature: & ye wandringe starrs: reade y^m without and looke within all y^t was come to ye bright and morning starr (Fox 1911: I. 53).

Fox exhorts his hearers 'to reade these without and within in there nature'. His hearers and readers must dissolve the boundary between self and world, to read the one in the other, and to read both as characters in the text of God's creation. The observing, or reading, subject is a constitutive element of the scrutinised text. The Quaker propensity for seamlessness—for elision rather than juxtaposition, for metaphor rather than simile—melds subject with object, text with reader, past and future with present, such that meaning ebbs and flows unimpeded across an unbroken field of signification.

The grounding of the Quaker doctrine of the Inward Light in a notion of temporal simultaneity offers a significant perspective from which to begin to analyse the narrative principles of Fox's *Journal*. Fox's text differs from truly diurnal forms, written 'to the moment' in the midst of the events they record, and narrated successively on a continuous grid (Sherman 1996: 43, 34). His is written retrospectively, from the vantage point of belatedness, though manifestly not from a climactic end-point, for the *Journal* famously ends somewhat abruptly—in White's formulation, terminates rather than concludes—with the words:

Soe it was & soe it is by y^m y^t are not in the holy ghoast against y^m y^t are in it.
Which all this is reproved by ye holy ghoast {to this day} (Fox 1911: II. 321).

Fox's end-point barely constitutes a conclusion, except inasmuch as it offers the most condensed and rudimentary summary of Quaker patterns of thought: 'Soe it was & soe it is' restates the Quaker 'fusion of time'; 'y^m y^t are not in the holy ghoast against y^m y^t are in it' demonstrates habitual Quaker patterns of oppositional thinking; and both of these are confirmed by final recourse to the most ineffable element of the trinity, the holy ghost, as the ultimate arbiter of truth and justice. Such a minimalist reaffirmation, however, hardly confers shape or effects closure with regard to the preceding narrative. However an awareness of the End might be found to shape this text, it is not an End that is to be found at the end of the *Journal*.

If Fox's *Journal* does not share the basic quality of diurnal forms of being written in the midst of the time and events with which it is concerned, and if the Quaker commitment to the ahistorical simultaneity of *kairotic* time is at odds with the diurnal form's commitment to the calibration of event with chronological markers, it is at

first difficult to conceive of how this text might usefully be recuperated as ‘journal’, and how this might inform an analysis. This is to lose sight, however, of one of the most immediately striking characteristics of the *Journal*: namely, the insistent sequentiality of time and journey that constitutes the raw material of its temporal scheme and narrative structure. In Fox’s *Journal*, godly selves are created through the action of travelling. The etymology and history of the word ‘journal’ as a record of travel or as a workbook begins to suggest how its frame of reference is especially appropriate to early Quaker notions of time, history and, indeed, theology.

Nigel Smith has drawn attention to the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s record of the disparate meanings of ‘journal’ in the seventeenth century, from ‘A book containing notices concerning the daily stages of a route and other information for travellers’, and ‘A record of travel’, to ‘A daily record of commercial transactions, entered as they occur, in order to the keeping of accounts’ and ‘A daily record of events or occurrences kept for private or official use’. Of these, Smith concludes that ‘It’s hard to see how the Friends who published the Journal weren’t playing on’ the latter two senses (Smith 2004: 4). Common to these is the sense of dailiness of the journal’s record, but coupled to this are associations with travel and labour. The journal and the journey are linked etymologically, from the Latin *diurnus*, via the French *journal*, whose meanings included a day, a day’s travel and a day’s labour. The notion of ‘work’ links both journal and journey to that prime Quaker touchstone word, ‘travail’. Not only does ‘travel’ derive from ‘travail’, and hence bring us back to the journey; the word ‘travail’ habitually conflated, or, more accurately, refused to distinguish between, work and journeying, an elision that was particularly telling in the context of early Quaker itinerant preaching and prophesying. Travailing or labouring to deliver others from the darkness of evil into the light of God’s truth could also invoke associations with childbirth. Alice Cobb’s testimony to her mother, for example, proclaimed that Alice Curwen’s ‘Labour hath been great (both in this Nation and Other Nations and Islands) to gather many from Darkness to the Light’, and continued, on a more personal note, ‘*she was a tender Mother to us indeed*’, constantly ‘breathing to the Lord God for her Off-spring’ (Curwen 1680: sig. C3^r–C3^v [original emphasis]). The fruits of Curwen’s labour are not just her own godly children, but an international progeny of believers in whose lives God’s truth will proliferate. The ‘journal’ is, furthermore, associated more specifically with accounting as a form of work. Sherman observed that the journal as a record of accounts is not strictly diurnal, nor composed *in medias res*; on the contrary, it is ‘emphatically occasional’, and ‘Its purposes have nothing to do with the figuration of time as continuum’. Journals, he concludes, were true to their accounting roots in being selective and intermittent ‘narratives of discontinuous incidents and instances’ (Sherman 1996: 59). The word ‘journal’ thus connotes a dailiness or systematic regularity to record-keeping (‘making an account of’), to working and to travelling. As Smith says, attention to the semantic field makes evident a historical ‘coalescence of labour and spatial displacement (i.e. travel)’ (Smith 2004: 2). A journal is thus not only a daily record; it is also, and crucially (if variously), plotted between the co-ordinates of work and travel.

The term ‘journal’ thus has precisely the kind of elasticity and compendiousness that recent critics have found to be so clearly lacking. Far from being a genre that,

from its inception, comprised a self-centred record, it includes within its historical remit a primary set of references to work and to travel; it allows for selectiveness and occasionality, as well as dailiness; in many of its contexts, it includes a notion of stock-taking and account-keeping. Many of these associations can be seen to inform early Quaker use of the term. As Michael Mascuch notes, early Quaker itinerant ministers sent news or 'journalls' of their travels in dictated letters to Swarthmoor, which were then copied and sent out to Friends:

One such text, at the Friends' House Library, London, Swarthmore MS vol. III, 6, is an undated letter from James Naylor [*sic*] to Margaret Fell c. 1654, describing Naylor's preaching in the north of England at that time; it was later (c. 1675) identified by George Fox as 'journall of j. n. 1654 about' who wrote this on the back of the copy. Vols. i—iv of the Swarthmore MS Collections consist almost entirely of copies of early letters of this sort, over 1,400 in all (Mascuch 1997: 233 n. 6).

This use of the term seems to relate most directly to the *OED* definition 2b, of 'journal' as a 'record of travel'. But for early itinerant Friends, as for Fox himself, such a record would also, necessarily, be a record of work, for to travel was also to work, as public Friends took the message of the Inward Light to as many individuals and communities as possible. If accounts of these 'travails'—working journeys, itinerant labours—were termed 'journalls', including by Fox himself, then the designation of Fox's own account as 'journal' begins to look less like a careless mistitling by his literary executors, and more like the purposeful positioning of it within an already longstanding tradition of accounts of their travails by early Friends, produced as public documents for dissemination among their wider communities.

As an account of a life of itinerancy, it is unsurprising that temporal and spatial sequencing be the narrative's structuring principle; the record of the passage of time is also a record of ceaseless journeying. Characteristically, the *Journal* articulates its transitions from moment to moment and place to place through the repetition of phrases such as 'And soe we passed on', 'And soe after', 'And from thence', 'And in the morninge', 'And so I went'. The persistent use of the noncommittal connective 'and' between sentences endows the work, Smith suggests, with 'an impression of [biblical] authority' (Smith 1998: xxii); but it also produces the *Journal* as a fundamentally paratactic text, with no sense of temporal, spatial and causal relations between sentences. This is countered, however, by a similarly persistent recourse to the hypotactic connectives 'so', 'then', 'after', 'from thence', which instate not only a sense of the temporal and spatial sequencing of events, but also assert (paradigmatically in 'so') a causal connection between them.⁵ The apparent randomness of 'and' combines with the purposiveness of 'so' to produce a narrative account that is at once improvisatory and intentional, in which the direction of text and journey emerges incrementally, but also suggests an underlying, perhaps mysterious, but resolute sense of structure and design.

In Fox's *Journal* the combination of apparent randomness and a resolute sense of design is informed by a Quaker 'fusion of time' still more complex than that identified by Underwood. The simultaneity of past, present and future in the *kairoitic* notion of the Inward Light of the indwelling Christ is set alongside the *chronos* or

sequentiality which seems to pull in the opposite direction. How do we make sense of a narrative which progresses through sequence, while simultaneously insisting on the irrelevance of carnal time, of *chronos*? The answer lies in a further reframing of temporality, of the relation of *chronos* to *kairos* as constituted by the *Journal*. Ultimately, the unremitting sequentiality of Fox's text suggests not that *chronos* is dissolved or superseded by *kairos*; it is not simply that the 'the waiting time' gives way to the fulfilment of God's time. Instead, through its doctrine of the indwelling Christ, Quakerism refuses the distinction between *kairos* and *chronos*, revealing the immanence of the former *within* the latter. In the previously quoted extract in which Fox was beaten by the 'rude multitude' on the common moss, we have an example of how the all-too-human events of Fox's journeys revealed a godly dispensation working within them. A similar doubled dynamic can be seen in the temporal and spatial unfolding of the journeys themselves. In the passage from moment to moment and from place to place, the apparently chance sequence of trajectory and encounter indicated by the habitual paratactic connective 'and' is coupled with, and given shape by, the hypotactic 'so'. The apparently random is revealed as ordered and purposeful:

And soe I was moved of ye Lord to come uppe againe through y^m & uppe into Ulverston markt: & there meetes mee a man with a sworde a souldyer: sir saide hee I am ashamed y^e you should be thus abused (Fox 1911: I. 59).

And soe I cleared all these thinges which they charged against mee (Fox 1911: I. 70).

And soe I past through ye Countryes as I said before Into Hampsheere & Dorset sheere {& Poole & Ringwoode} visiting freindes in ye Lords power & had great meetings amongst y^m (Fox 1911: I. 346).

'And soe' reproduces here the sense of random chance and divine order that is also present in the habitual Quaker phrase 'I was moved of ye Lord'. This sense of a divine plan emerging from apparently arbitrary events is characteristic not of Fox's *Journal* alone, but typical of many early Quaker narratives of journeys and sufferings, from Alice Curwen's and Joan Vokins's accounts of their travels to New England and Barbados, to Dorothy Waugh's interpretation of her imprisonment in Carlisle, and Katherine Evans and Sarah Chevers's account of their imprisonment by the inquisition in Malta. In all these, as in Fox's *Journal*, purpose is predicated on, and emerges from, contingency, and reconfigures it. From the notion of the indwelling Christ, and the combination of *kairos* and *chronos*, flow simultaneity and sequence, parataxis and hypotaxis, improvisation and design. Just as inner and outer, self and world, are shown to be false differentiations, so, within the *Journal*, the sequential and the simultaneous, the paratactic and the hypotactic occupy the same field of signification. The paratactic 'and', apparently random, productive of no sense of design or order, proceeds incrementally and cumulatively, rather than through a progressive linearity. The purposeful and hypotactic 'so' imposes sequence, order and linearity, and thereby causation, teleology and significance.

The temporality that results from the elision of past, present and future might therefore be termed *chrono-kairotic*, suggesting neither the supersession of one by the other, nor the elision of the two in an undifferentiated temporal plane, but indicative

of a hierarchical relation by which, through turning to Christ within, *kairos* can be revealed to underlie, structure, give form to and bring an end to *chronos*. Purpose within contingency, hypotaxis consequent to parataxis: time after time, the *Journal* suggests the playing out—the fulfilment—of the divine plan through the everyday acts and encounters of Fox's journeys. It is not, however, the attention to the everyday that sets this apart from other contemporary spiritual journals. Spiritual journals too navigate *chronos* in search of *kairos*, but do so in the service of salvation by means of a process of self-reckoning—it is in this that it is 'a technology of the self'. What is different in Fox's *Journal* is that this scrutiny is not productive of an emerging and developing 'self'; it is not an aid to 'becoming', an element within the believer's personal spiritual progress towards assurance and salvation. Once he is fully defined by the doctrine of the Inward Light, Fox is completed; his own rectilinear spiritual development or 'successiveness' is fulfilled in the *kairos* of the present and indwelling Christ. What is in a state of change and progression, as tracked by the *Journal*'s sequential structure, is the perpetual 'becoming' of those around him, and the events that, together, they (Friends and opponents) enact, as the Inward Light is embraced or rejected. *Chronos* both dissolves, to reveal the timeless truth of the indwelling Christ, and persists, as fallen will refuses to turn to the light. The same event—such as Fox's encounter with the soldier with the sword, who is beaten cruelly 'because hee had taken my parte' (Fox 1991: I. 59)—figures simultaneously in both the *chronotic* and *kairotic* temporal frames.

Time within the *Journal* is at once rectilinear, progressive and sequential, and eternal, static and immeasurable; or, rather, divine time is to be understood as revealed within the progression of carnal time. As in the Bible's book of Acts, the acts, one after another, of the godly and ungodly alike endlessly reproduce the greater truth of godly time, and show both the beginning and the end within its midst. Hereby both the time of the primitive church and its immediate experience of Christ, and the promised future return of Christ collapse into the present moment, such that any linear notion of time dissolves, producing instead an eternal present in which Christ is still present and already returned, indwelling in each believer. This understanding of Christ's return is not, however, a universal or singular event; it is multiple, repeated, incremental, as more and more—though never all, and never at once—embrace the doctrine of the Inward Light. The chronological organisation of the *Journal* is thus a structural or formal means through which is demonstrated the irruption of *kairos* within *chronos*. Here, the *Journal* repeatedly asserts, can Christ be seen—in this place, at this time. It might not matter precisely when, in chronological terms, that moment was, but it is nevertheless important that it is registered that this happens repeatedly, on a daily basis, on a first day, or a third day, or a market day, and that it happens anywhere, in Sedbergh and Underbarrow, in Ringwood, Bristol, Barbados and Boston. The chronographic form, *despite* its retrospective composition, produces a sense of being in the midst of the journey, the events, the encounters, hostilities and convincements. From this emerges, incrementally but repeatedly, in the constantly recreated present of Fox's itinerancy, a sense of the perpetual presence of the indwelling Christ.



A focus on temporalities offers one way to conceptualise the relationship between the *Journal* as a document of self and a history of a movement. In Fox's *Journal*, the self has become what it can become, and that becoming brings with it the dissolution of the self so completed. As Webster suggests, 'Self-denial was intended to create a vacuum that might be inhabited by divine plenitude' (Webster 1996: 43) or, in the words of Fox's Fifth-Monarchist contemporary Anna Trapnel, 'they that have the flowings of thee, are self-denying' (Trapnel 2000: 77). Because of Quaker apprehensions of Christ's immanence, however, what this means for the *Journal* was that the work it undertook was the charting and the reproduction of presence—the presence of Christ, in the present moment and present place. Its successiveness, its attention to the passing of time, and the passing from place to place, reproduces the repeated turn to Christ within, and the revelation of a *chrono-kairotic* present. And this is tracked, not with regard to Fox but with regard to its wider presence, through the focus on Fox: Penn's 'Man of God' figures as the touchstone and register of the steady turn to the Inward Light among the 'the People called *Quakers*'. Just as *kairos* emerges from within *chronos*, so the history of the movement is figured in the itinerant and charismatic figure of Fox as represented in the *Journal*. Cadbury suggests that by the time of his death, Fox 'had made himself dispensable' (Cadbury 1952: 755); if so, this is effected not through his redundancy to the movement, but through his dispersal among it in the soon-to-be published *Journal*, a copy of which 'was presented to each Friends' meeting, and often methodically circulated among its members' (1952: 754). History and subjectivity are thus not two dimensions between which a choice is to be made when analysing the *Journal*; instead, each is a dimension of, and bodies forth, the other. The kinds of elisions and correspondences suggested here echo those set out by St Paul: 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ' (1 Cor. 12.12.). It is the Inward Light of Christ which, ultimately, is figured in the dynamic between Fox and the movement.

In the *Journal*, the history of the movement emerges through the working itinerancy of Fox, and it is this relation to labour and to travel that, as much as anything, validates the designation of the text as 'journal'. What, however, of the remaining impediment to thinking of this as a journal, that of retrospection? Given the revelation of *kairos* in the midst of dailiness, a doctrine fundamental to Quaker conceptions of time, such an opposition between writing 'in the midst', as Kermode put it, and writing with hindsight, loses all purchase. For, once the doctrine of the indwelling Christ was accepted, early Quakers were assured that (unlike the Ranters imprisoned in Coventry) they *did* already know how the story ended. The Inward Light illuminated the future before that future was lived, and indeed brought that future into the realm of the present, so that strictly there was no future, no prospective darkness. Rather than retrospection conferring an overall shape, trajectory and end-directedness to the narrative unavailable to those writing in the midst of events, in this context that overall shape is not something conferred by the text's ending. Instead, the 'end' that confers form and meaning is an end that can be discerned from the beginning of

Fox's narrative, an end that reconfigures all other temporal (and thus narrative) framings: the end of time in the fulfilment realised in the repeated turn to Christ within.

It is in this that the *Journal's* narrative structure constitutes a 'technology of presence'—the presence of Christ, in Fox and other Friends, and in their travails, sufferings and imprisonments. The text's insistent adherence to a chronological structure produces a sense of the renewed importance of the endless unfolding of the present time, because that present time is already the time of the indwelling and returned Christ. Formally and syntactically, it becomes a means by which the present of both the here (*this place*) and now (*this time*) plays out of, and into, the eternity of godly time, thereby producing a multi-located 'here' and an atemporal 'now'.

NOTES

1. *A Journal or Historical Account of the Life, Travels, Sufferings, Christian Experiences and Labour of Love in the Work of the Ministry of that Ancient, Eminent and Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, George Fox*, London: Printed for Thomas Northcott, 1694. This article for the most part uses Penney's edition based on the Spence MS as its copy text when referring to the *Journal*; our references make clear any exceptions to this. This is not primarily a bibliographical study of Fox's texts, which have been the subject of much scholarship. For a comprehensive comparison of Ellwood's first edition and the Spence MS, see Cadbury 1972. The question of a manuscript journal as source for the 1694 printed *Journal* remains the subject of some uncertainty. Cadbury 1939: 2 concludes that the text Fox termed his 'great Journall' is in fact lost, though similar to the account in the Spence MS and subsequent printed editions; see also Nickalls 1952: 146; Ingle 1993: 33 n. 8. The character of this lost 'journal' remains uncertain. Penney concludes that the printed *Journal* 'bears little, if any, evidence of having been preceded by any form of diary, regularly written up, although Ellwood states that Fox "himself kept a Journal"' (Fox 1911: I. xxxvii). All this notwithstanding, our prefatory quotation shows that Fox used the term 'journal' to describe his own accounts of his life, and this text is still always referred to, following Fox's first editors, as the 'journal'.

2. See especially Barker 1984; for a critique of such analyses, see Aers 1992.

3. For an analysis of the extent to which the account offered by Fox's *Journal* is shaped by later events and priorities, see Corns 1995: 104–10.

4. We use Nickalls's 1952 edition of the *Journal* for this quotation because these early pages are missing from the Spence MS and hence from Fox 1911. Nickalls uses Ellwood's first edition of 1694 to supply the account of these missing years. We thank one of our anonymous readers for bringing this passage to our attention.

5. See Sherman 1996: 68 on the formulation 'and so' in Pepys's *Diary*.

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