

his statement in 6<sup>12, 13</sup>. And that statement provides us with valuable data for estimating at least some features in the Jewish-Christian outlook. We may infer from Acts, as well as from certain early Christian writers, such as Hegesippus, that the Jewish-Christian wing of the Church remained in close touch with the synagogue, and, for a time at any rate, were tolerated as a sect within Judaism, holding certain peculiar Messianic views. But there is extraordinarily little direct evidence regarding their relation to the non-Christian Jewish community during the Apostolic Age. Here Paul draws aside the veil for a moment. He gives us, indeed, no clear indication as to the exact connexion of these Judaizers with the Jerusalem Church. But we may agree with Hoennicke that they were not originally proselytes from heathenism (p. 118, note 2), and that they came to the Christian communities of Galatia from some outside region, in all probability Palestine (p. 212). Their attitude towards their non-Christian brethren is made quite distinct. They show an eagerness to gain their favour. They are ready to go forth on proselytizing missions, not merely for the honour of the law, although that will always be a concomitant motive, but to demonstrate to the Jews that they

are at one with them in fundamentals. Hence they will take care not to lay too much emphasis on the crucified Messiah. For this doctrine must necessarily be a dividing-line between Christian and non-Christian Jews. When they can point to members of heathen-Christian communities whom they have induced to conform to the law and its regulations, they may expect to win credit with their brethren as real defenders of the faith.

Clearly, then, at this period in the Apostolic Age, there was a very intimate association between some sections of Jewish Christianity and the traditional Judaism of the synagogue. This attitude of compromise meant an obscuring of those very elements in the gospel which formed the kernel of Paulinism. In all likelihood, for a time, such compromise would be even easier for Jewish Christians throughout the Diaspora.

And so it is not difficult to understand how, by the closing decades of the first century, the deeper aspects of Paul's religious thought and teaching, which had come into the foreground owing to his emphasis on Christ crucified, faded before the more external, and, at the same time, typically Judaistic conception of Christianity as the New Law.

## The Practice of Circumambulation.

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CIRCUMAMBULATION is an ancient and wide-spread usage. It can best be studied in the manners and customs of ancient and modern India. There it has been practised from the oldest times down to the present day, and is mentioned in Buddhist as well as in Brahmanical texts. Bridegroom and bride walk round the fire; the Snātaka (according to Manu, iv. 36) has to circumambulate idols; Brāhmaṇas, kine; 'the Upoṣaṇavrata . . . involves the speaking of the truth, the observance of strict chastity, the circumambulating of images of the gods with the right side turned towards them'<sup>1</sup>; Prince Mrgāṅkadatta proceeds to walk round the tree in which the god dwells, with his right hand towards it<sup>2</sup>; Ambapālī, whose invitation was

<sup>1</sup> *Kathā-Sarit Sāgara*, Tawney, ii. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *loc. cit.* 365.

accepted by Buddha, 'rose from her seat and bowed down before him, and, keeping him on her right hand as she passed him, she departed thence.'<sup>3</sup> The *Pañch-Kośi-Yātrā*, which the pilgrim of to-day performs round the holy city of Benares, is a modern and striking example of the old *pradakṣiṇa*.<sup>4</sup> It is an old way of paying respect to a god, to a holy person, or any object of veneration, be it a temple or *chaitya*, a plant or tree, the fire, etc. The text-books of the Indian ritual, the Śrauta—as well as the Grhhyasūtras, distinguish two forms of circumambulation; it may be performed from left to right (*pradakṣiṇa*, *prasalavī*), or from right to left (*prasavya*, *apasalavī*), and it depends

<sup>3</sup> Rhys Davids, *S.B.E.*, xi. 30; Simpson, *The Buddhist Praying Wheel*, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> Simpson, *ibid.*, p. 80.

on the general character of the ceremony which direction is to be chosen.

Kātyāyana and other compilers of works on ritual give among the rules that regulate the sacrificial rite, the general prescription that in ceremonies performed for the gods all movements should be from left to right, but in ceremonies referring to the *manes*, 'demons,' or connected with witchcraft, etc., it is to be from right to left.<sup>1</sup> If the bride is led round the sacrificial fire, or the sacrificial oblations, such as milk, cake, or the animal that is going to be slaughtered, are consecrated by carrying round a firebrand or burning coal, it is done from left to right. The priest, however, who in ancestor-worship pours out the water for washing to the *manes*, follows the opposite direction and walks three times round the Vedi from right to left.<sup>2</sup> The difference between right and left permeates the whole ritual. The sacrificial thread hangs down from the left shoulder to the right side in all ceremonies that refer to the gods; but from the right to the left in ancestor-worship and witchcraft practices; and the left hand or foot is employed in the same manner. People go thrice from right to left round the corpse, which is carried from the house of mourning to the place of cremation,<sup>3</sup> wearing the sacrificial thread over the right shoulder (hanging down on the left side), having their hair stuck up at the right side, but loosened at the left, beating their thighs with the right hand, and fanning the corpse or the bones with the ends of their garments. The funeral being over, the mourners walk round the old fire that has become unfit for use and is carried aside, from right to left, beating their left thigh with the left hand.<sup>4</sup>

If the performer of a *pradakṣiṇa* holds in his hand a firebrand or burning coal, the ceremony is called the *paryagnikarāṇa*, probably meant to consecrate the object (like the sacrificial meal) to the gods, and, as Eggeling thinks, to ward off the dark and mischievous powers of Nature.<sup>5</sup> He compares the practice of *paryagnikarāṇa* with the carrying of fire round houses, fields, boats, etc., on the last night of the year—a custom which, according to A. Mitchell, still prevails in some parts

<sup>1</sup> Kātyāyana, i. 7. 26, 27; Āpastamba, xxiv. 2. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Āpastamba, i. 8. 11; Kātyāyana, v. 9. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Caland, *Altind. Todten-una Bestattungs-gebraeuche*, p. 24; *Lustratie-gebruik*, p. 29, 6 (22).

<sup>4</sup> Caland, *loc. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> *S.B.E.*, xii, 45, note.

of Scotland. In other cases the sprinkling of water forms part of the circumambulation ceremony. An uninterrupted stream of water is poured round a house which is going to be inhabited. A similar stream poured round a lodging secures it against snakes. Water is sprinkled round the place where the corpse of a relation is to be burned or his remains are to be buried. A jet of urine sprinkled from the horn of an animal round the lodging of a slave prevents him from escaping.

The circular movement is often followed by a counter movement.

'After undoing the band, he moves thrice round from right to left, spreading the sacrificial grass all over (the altar); while spreading it all over from right to left in three layers, he reserves as much as may serve for the *prastara*-bunch. He then moves again thrice round from left to right. The reason why he again moves thrice round from left to right, is that, while the first time he went away from here after those three ancestors of his, he now comes back again from them to this, his own world: that is why he again moves thrice round from left to right.'<sup>6</sup>

There is no doubt that this counter movement, in all cases where it follows a circular movement from right to left, is connected with the intention to bring the performer from the world of the *manes* back to that of the living, or, as Caland rightly observes,<sup>7</sup> to ward off the evil influences likely to befall him in consequence of close contact with the realm of death. In other cases, however, it seems intended to do justice to the Devas as well as to the *manes*, since not only a circular movement from right to left, but also one from left to right is sometimes followed by a movement in the opposite direction. Different scholars have drawn attention to the fact that the same custom may be observed among other nations; and Caland, who has treated the whole subject on broad lines, is of opinion that it originated in, and is restricted to, the Indo-Aryan epoch. It seems especially remarkable that a good many examples can be adduced from Celtic antiquity which show a striking similarity to the Indian usage. Tawney refers to

'the Highland usage of making the *deasil* or walking three times round a person according to the course of the sun. Old Highlanders will still make the *deasil* round those to whom they wish well. To go round the person in the

<sup>6</sup> *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, J. Eggeling, *S.B.E.*, xii. p. 425.

<sup>7</sup> *Lustratie-gebruik*, p. 37 f.

opposite direction, or *withershins*, is an evil incantation, and brings ill-fortune.<sup>1</sup>

Hunt says that

'If an invalid goes out for the first time, and makes a circuit, the circuit must be with the sun; if against the sun, there will be a relapse.'<sup>2</sup>

Martin relates that

'Some of the poorer sort of the people in these islands retain the custom of performing these rounds *sun-ways*, about the persons of their benefactors, three times, when they bless them and wish good success to all their enterprises. Some are very careful, when they set out to sea, that the boat be first rowed about sun-ways. . . .'<sup>3</sup>

Sinclair writes that

'When a Highlander goes to bathe or to drink water out of a consecrated fountain, he must always approach by going round the place from East to West on the South side, in imitation of the apparent diurnal motion of the sun. This is called, in Gaelic, going the right or the lucky way. The opposite course is the wrong, or the unlucky way.'<sup>4</sup>

The unhallowed character of this 'opposite course,' which is called *cartua-sul* or *tuathpoll*, may conveniently be illustrated by the example of Sweeny, son of Colman, who, having incurred a curse, 'was assailed in the battle by swarms of *left-wheeling* demons in the air.'<sup>5</sup>

We have quoted these instances in order to illustrate the almost perfect agreement between Indian and Old-Celtic notions, which, indeed, may be due to a historical or rather prehistoric relation of the two races. It is worth noticing that the explanation of the circular movement given by the Celtic parallels as an imitation of the daily course of the sun corresponds with the explanation given by Kātyāyana on the basis of some Brāhmaṇa texts.<sup>6</sup> To an observer who turns his face towards him in our hemisphere, the sun moves from the left to the right; and it is quite intelligible that in all ceremonies connected with gods or men,

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. cit.*, i. p. 573, note to p. 99, quoting from Henderson, *Folklore of the Northern Countries*, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Romances and Drolls of the West of England*, p. 418; quoted by Tawney.

<sup>3</sup> *Western Islands of Scotland*, 118; quoted by Ferguson, *Proc. Roy. Ir. Acad.*, March 1877, p. 358.

<sup>4</sup> 'Statistical Account of Scotland,' in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, i.; quoted by Tawney, *loc. cit.*, ii. 447.

<sup>5</sup> Ferguson, p. 363.

<sup>6</sup> i. 7, 26, 27. See also v. Meyer, *Ueber den Ursprung von Rechts und Links*, in *ZE*, 1873; vol. v. (25 ff.).

and which are meant to be auspicious, the circular movement should follow the course of that great Giver of life and good fortune, whereas the movement in the opposite direction, *withershins*, will indicate death, evil, ill-luck.

The circumambulation is well known also to other Indo-European nations, but the difference between the sunwise and the *withershins* movement seems here to be much less emphasized. Even here, however, from the materials collected by Ferguson, Valeton,<sup>7</sup> and Caland, a few instances may be quoted which favour the assumption that both ways of circumambulating, the *prasavya* as well as the *pradaksina*, were known also to other tribes of our race. A German peasant walks round the village sunwise in order to protect it from the plague;<sup>8</sup> but a woman wishing to become a hag, must go against the sun.<sup>9</sup> Statius records, in his *Thebais* (vi. 213), that seven squadrons (*turmae*) circumambulated (*decursio*) the pyre of Archemorus, turning their left to it, and afterwards rode back in the opposite direction in order to prevent 'novi funeris auspicium'; Placidus Lactantius adds the remark, 'sinistro orbe quia nihil dextrum mortuis convenit. Ut funeribus absolverentur dextro ordine redeunt.'

Examples like this, however, seem to be of rare occurrence. In most cases we read only of the circumambulation from left to right, sometimes even without the explanatory words. But from practices which still survive, e.g. in the Roman Catholic Church, it may be surmised that the use and meaning of the *withershins* movement have never become quite extinct, and have always been regarded as contrasting with the sunwise movement and its auspicious character. We may note that even in India the *pradaksina* sometimes loses its original meaning, and is practised merely to salute a person reverentially; Rāma, for example, in taking leave of his father and stepmother circumambulates them from the left.<sup>10</sup> Much more would this be the case, in other countries, where the religious character of the ceremony was less obvious.

<sup>7</sup> 'De modis auspicandi Romanorum' in *Mnemosyne*, xvii. 275.

<sup>8</sup> Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 993.

<sup>9</sup> Wuttke, *Deutscher Volksglaube*, § 381.

<sup>10</sup> *Rāmāyana*, ii. 19, 18, 25, 44.