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1984

# PROCEEDINGS

of the  
Thirty-First International Congress of  
Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa

TOKYO-KYOTO

31st August—7th September

1983

Edited by

YAMAMOTO Tatsuro

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ESIN, Emel: *Eren*—An Aspect of the Turkish Mediacy in the Westward Transmission of Eastern Culture, in the Case of Mysticism.

THE TŌHŌ GAKKAI  
(The Institute of Eastern Culture)

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DR. EMEL ESIN  
KÜTÜPHANESİ  
YAMAMOTO TRAVEL

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Demirb. no:	00266
Tasvir no:	A ESIN.E ERLE 1984

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Tek-Esin Vakfı

ESIN, Emel: *Eren*—An Aspect of the Turkish Mediacy in the Westward Transmission of Eastern Culture, in the Case of Mysticism.

The land of the Central Asian Turks, situated between eastern and western Asia, formed a natural bridge for the flow of cultural currents, between the two ends of the continent. The Turks had, moreover, belonged to an eastern religion, a universalist worship of heaven-earth-ancestors. They later adhered, in large groups, to Buddhism, then to western Asian creeds, Manichaeism, to some degree Christianity and most of all, Islam.

This paper hopes to dwell on aspects of heterodox Islamic *derwish* orders, such as the Abdāl-Qalandar-Bektashī, in connection with their links with eastern Asian Universalism and its impact on Turkish Buddhism.

The common outlook, between the Turkish esoteric, sometimes unorthodox interpretations of all three creeds, might be called monism, even perhaps pantheism (*Bir tözlüg bolmaq*, in Uyghur Buddhist texts; *Vahdet-i vücūd*, in Islamic ones). All existence was viewed as a unity, the soul of which were one, or a pair of polar figures. The heavenly god, sometimes with solar aspect and the earth deity constituted

the two poles of a universal dichotomy, for the Turks who had remained attached to the cult of the *tengrilik* (presumably, the Turkish word for the celestial temple). The principle of Buddhahood, viewed as spiritual, universal monarchy, was considered the soul of all existence, by Buddhist Turks.

Various figures, such as the Caliph 'Alī; Adam, as symbol of humanity and Khidr, the embodiment of immortality and of its elixir, were seen as *qutb* (pole) of the universe, by heterodox *dervishes*. The polar figures were surrounded by secondary personages, said to govern the world's quadrants. The cosmic repartition was equally applied to the microcosm of the body, the heart, or perceptive centre, called *köngül*, both in Buddhist and Muslim Turkish texts, being the seat of the polar principle. Thence the adoption of the spatial and corporate *maṇḍala*, with esoteric letters, as in Buddhism, by the Hurūfī sect. The transposition of concepts included also the term *eren* (a heroic saint, the equivalent of the Indian *vīra*), used both for Buddhist and Islamic anchorites. Holy places, such as the Uyghur Buddhist Tantric temples as Toyuq, became the seat of Qalandar *dervishes*, who considered the caves, as abode of the "Seven-sleepers" of Islamic hagiology. Mount Budh, in Ceylon, was also associated with Adam.

M. J. Shendge: Is the characterization of Buddhist temples as Tantric an established fact?

Esin: Yes, it was established by A. Grünwedel long ago.

Friday, September 2, Afternoon Session

Chairpersons: LECLANT, Jean; KONISHI Masatoshi

YAJIMA Fumio: On the Relationship of the Old Persian, Indic and Ethiopic Writing Systems.

We are much interested in knowing how the Indic Writing System reached us, and also we are desirous to know why the pure consonantal Phoenician Alphabet became to have partly syllabic character in the Indic Writing System, which is to be thought intermediate form between pure Alphabetical Writing System (consonantal in Semitic, and consonantal-plus-vowell notation in Greek/Roman Writing Systems) and the Syllabic Writing System (as in Japanese *kana* Writing System).

The oldest Indic Writing System known to us is the Brahmi Writing as seen on the Aśoka Inscriptions (c. 270 B.C.), whose origin has been object of many discussions