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Introduction to Anquetil-Duperron's Unpublished Correspondence

Discovery of a Medallion Portraying Anquetil-Duperron

Part 1: Introduction to Anquetil-Duperron's Unpublished Correspondence

Anquetil-Duperron(1731-1805), famous French oriental scholar and translator from Persian to French of his well-know work *Le Zend-Avesta, ouvrage de Zoroastre*, and from Persian to Latin the *Oupnek'hat*, Persian version of the *Upanishad*, has left us, his unpublished correspondence which I would like to speak of briefly during this conference. From 1805 to our present day, the articles written on Anquetil-Duperron give us a summary of his life and works. Nevertheless, none relate the correspondence he had with oriental scholars, ministers, ambassadors and historians whether in France, England or on a mission in China. This unpublished correspondence, which I found at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, while doing research for my doctoral dissertation (*Anquetil-Duperron, sa place et son rôle dans la Renaissance orientale*, Université de Montpellier, France, 1986, 400 pages), is of great importance to us. As opposed to articles written against him, his correspondence proves that he had friends he could rely on. Friends such as: Leroux-Deshaurerayes(1724-1795), an oriental scholar who advised him on what languages he should learn while in India; Père Gaubil(1689-1759), French missionary and sinologist who gave him an outlook on Chinese Buddhism; Thomas Birch, D.D.(1705-1766), historian and Secretary of the Royal Society who led him to the famous 'Zend' manuscript at the Bodleian Library; Robert Orme(1728-1801), historian of India, who agreed with Anquetil-Duperron's political and historical point of view; Sir Charles W. Boughton Rouse, member of Parliament and General Governor of Bengal; Silvestre de Sacy(1758-1838), Secretary of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, and many others all show beyond doubt that he had trustworthy friends. In spite of the 18th century European Encyclopaedists' criticism towards his work and translations, Anquetil-Duperron remains one of the greatest oriental scholars of his century.

Part 2: Discovery of a Medallion Portraying Anquetil-Duperron

In the *Osiris* review, *Studies on the History and Philosophy of Science, and the History of Learning and Culture*, George Sarton published an article on "Anquetil-Duperron(1731-1805)." In his paper, George Sarton states that "No portrait of Anquetil-Duperron is known; Raymond Schwab found none and my inquiries at the Société Asiatique, the Musée Guimet, and the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute in Bombay have been fruitless." George Sarton also had solicited help from Emile Benveniste and conducted research at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, at the British Museum and at Harvard Library. My quest on this subject has been fruitful for, while examining a book entitled *Les médailles de David d'Angers réunies et publiées par son fils*, I have learnt of the existence of a medallion portraying Anquetil-Duperron.

On this occasion, I would like to show the audience a color slide illustrating Anquetil-Duperron on the medallion as well as a large black and white photograph of the medallion.

In conclusion, after more than two centuries after his death, in 1805, Anquetil-Duperron, founder of Indian and Persian studies in Europe, is still brought to light today with his unpublished correspondence as well as medallion portraying the famous oriental scholar.