



JAUBERT, PIERRE AMÉDÉE ÉMILIEN-PROBE

JAUBERT, PIERRE AMÉDÉE ÉMILIEN-PROBE (b. Aix-en-Provence, 3 June 1779; d. Paris, 28 January 1847; [FIGURE 1](#)), French orientalist who also served as interpreter and diplomat at Napoleon Bonaparte's court. He studied Turkish, Arabic, and Persian languages for two years (1796-98) with Sylvestre de Sacy at the École des Langues Orientales in Paris, and then was appointed interpreter with the title "jeune de langues" at the French legation in Constantinople. Then he took part, as the interpreter, in Napoleon's expedition to Egypt (1798-99) and in 1799 became the senior interpreter in the service of Napoleon (1769-1821). He taught for two years (1800-01) at the École des Langues Orientales, before accompanying French troops in 1802 in their expedition to Alexandria in Egypt. On his return to France in 1803, he was appointed secretary interpreter at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and professor of Turkish language at the École des Langues Orientales. In 1804, he was charged to announce to the Ottoman Emperor Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1807) that Napoleon had been crowned emperor. In March of the following year, he was sent to Persia to establish an alliance with Fath-ʿAli Shah Qājār (r. 1797-1834, q.v.) against England and Russia. Jaubert accomplished this mission in spite of many difficulties caused by the Ottomans, such as being imprisoned near the Persian border for eight months (August 1805-March 1806). It was thus only in June 1806 that he was received in audience by the Shah of Persia in Tehran and presented a letter from Napoleon. The negotiations were carried out very well and the court of Persia



offered him a large portrait of the shah as well as various Persian manuscripts that Jaubert gave to the Imperial Library after his return to Paris in January 1807 (Robinson, p. 875). Towards the end of April of the same year, he went to the castle of Finkenstein in East Prussia as interpreter for the negotiations between Napoleon and the ambassador of the shah of Persia for a treaty of alliance against Russia and Great Britain. These negotiations were concluded by the Treaty of Finkenstein, which was signed on 4 May 1807 (Hurewitz, I, pp. 184-85), but Napoleon's peace treaty with Russia two months later made the Finkenstein Treaty practically insignificant.

Jaubert received many privileges from Napoleon Bonaparte: the cross of chevalier of the Légion d'honneur, an annual rent of 4,000 francs, the title of Chevalier of the Empire (May 1808), and the position of Master of the requests at the Council of State (1810). During the period known as Hundred Days (20 March 8-July 1815), Jaubert occupied the position of the "Chargé d'affaires" of France in Constantinople. That was why the next French regime did not appreciate his services and he was dismissed. Afterwards, he devoted his time to linguistic research and to teaching. In 1818-19, he embarked on a new trip to the East. In 1921, he published his travel account *Voyage en Arménie et en Perse*, in which he discussed the economic possibilities of Persia (pp. 282-89) using the accounts of other French travelers. He described the Qajar court (pp. 227-34) and various Iranian ceremonies and compared them with those of the Ottomans (pp. 290-319). He devoted a number of pages to an account of the nomads in Iran (pp. 250-63) and also mentioned the situation of the Iranian women vis-à-vis those in the Ottoman Empire (pp. 320-25). In a chapter concerning the population, incomes, and spending, Jaubert compared the situation of that time in Iran with the past and wrote: "The Persians are constantly exposed to the exactions and to the violence of the subaltern agents of the government" (p. 273). Mention should also be made of his translation of Šarif Edrisi's geography.

In 1830, he joined the Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres while teaching as the professor of the Persian language in the Collège de France. In 1834, he was named president of the Société asiatique. In 1841, he was appointed "Pair de France" in the Chambre des Pairs in Paris. He became Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur (1845) and was president of the Société asiatique until his death on 28 January 1847.



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