

Michele Bernardini. *Mémoire et propagande à l'époque timouride*. Paris, Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 2008, 164 p., bibliographie, index. (*Studia Iranica*, Cahier 37)

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- 1 While the events of political and military career of Timur (736/1336-807/1405) have been substantially documented, there still remain a number of questions regarding how exactly Timur chose to profile himself and legitimize his “accomplishments” in a milieu which intersected an impressive array of cultural and religious traditions: Mongol, Turkic, Iranian, and Islamic... Inspired by some earlier works, Bernardini’s book is devoted to exploring the symbiotic relationship between memory and propaganda; for him, the intention of this study is to “above all, identify the principal instruments which support a controversial power during a time where force alone is insufficient to maintain that power” (p. 44).
- 2 The first chapter (“The Construction of Origins: Elaboration of Literary Myths and Accounts of the Past”) examines specific instances where historical sources (both contemporary and later ones) discuss Timur’s familial pedigree and his emergence in the Central Asian milieu. The second chapter (“Timur the Demon and Timur the Ghazi...”) focuses on two texts – ‘Azīz Astarābādī’s *Bazm-o-razm*, and *Rūz-nāme-ye Ġazāvāt-e Hendūstān* by Ġiyāṭ al-Dīn ‘Alī Monšī Yazdī – and their presentation of Timur’s monumental invasion of India (801/1398) in order to explore the degree to which we encounter obvious historiographical contradictions. The next chapter explores the epic tradition of versified chronicles in the Timurid context, principally on the basis of the *Timūr-nāme* by ‘Abd Allāh Hātefī, whereby, following the *ḥamāse-ye tāriḥī* tradition

emulating Ferdowsī's 11th-century *Šāh-nāme*, Hātefi chose to profile Timur and various episodes of Timur's life (expansion across Iran, the conquest of India, the campaign against the Ottoman sultān Bāyazīd) in a light reminiscent of Maḥmūd of Ġazna. Bernardini's conclusion ("Final Remarks") propose a synthesis of these diverse historiographical considerations.

- 3 For a detailed critical review, see *Studia Iranica* 40 (2011).
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**Thèmes** : 4.1. Histoire médiévale

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