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*Moša'ša'iyān. Māhiyat-e fekrī-ejtemā'ī va farāyand-e taḥavollāt-e tāriḥī. Tehrān, Āḡā, 1382/2003, 394 p., bibliography, index.*

Rudi Matthee

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- 1 This study, begun as a doctoral dissertation submitted to the Tarbiyat-e Modarres University in Tehran in 1379/2000, fully deserves the prize it won for being one of the year's best studies on Iranian history. Not only does it advance our knowledge of the intriguing dynasty of the Moša'ša' immeasurably by drawing on a number of manuscript sources, such as the *Tāriḥ-e Moša'ša'iyān*, and, for the ideological underpinnings, Sayyed Moḥammad b. Fallāḥ's *Kalām al-Mahdī*. It also represents a sophisticated study of the religious and social makeup of the dynasty, its interaction with the central Safavid government, and its development until the late 17th century, when the area erupted in turmoil and the dynasty dissolved.
- 2 The book is divided into three parts. Part one discusses the physical, political, and religious landscape of southwest Iran and lower Iraq prior to the establishment of the Safavid state in 1501. Ample attention is paid here to the heterodox tendencies inherent in groups such the Ḥorūfi, the Nūrbaḥš and the Ahl-e Ḥaqq, all three contributors to the radical Shi'i ideology of the Moša'ša', which, as the author argues, centred on the divinity of 'Alī as crafted by Sayyed Moḥammad b. Fallāḥ (d. 870/1465-66), the founder of the movement. Part two discusses the rise of the Moša'ša', which began as an essentially tribal Arab movement concentrated in the marshes that straddle lower Iraq and Khuzestan, and the process by which the area fell under the sway of the Safavids following Shah Isma'il's expedition to the region in the early 16th century. Part three represents a fine-grained examination of the nature and evolution of subsequent relations between the Moša'ša' and the central Safavid government. In their capacity as *vālīs*, regional governors, the rulers of the Moša'ša' continued to enjoy a large measure of independence from the central state. Still, the author argues, the Shi'ism professed by

them changed considerably in the process, moving increasingly closer to the *Iṭnā-'ašarī* version propagated by the Safavids.

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**Thèmes** : 4.2.1. Safavides et Qājārs

**nompropre** Sayyed Moḥammad b. Fallāḥ, Shah Isma'īl, Safavids

## AUTEURS

**RUDI MATTHEE**

University of Delaware