TRIAL OF THE BĀB: SHIʻITE ORTHODOXY CONFRONTS
ITS MIRROR IMAGE*

Trials of religious heretics have always assumed a central importance in religious history, and have frequently been the subject of close scrutiny in the modern period. The trials of Jesus Christ,\(^1\) al-Ḥallāj,\(^2\) Galileo,\(^3\)

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Giordano Bruno, Joan of Arc, Michael Servetus, and others have drawn the attention of scholars for a wide variety of reasons. More broadly, and for similar reasons, we have seen studies of the Inquisition, witchcraft trials (often linked to the inquisition), the Albigensians,

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9 See Z. Oldenbourg, Massacre at Montsegur: A History of the Albigensian Crusade, New York, 1961; J. R. Strayer, The Albigensian Crusades, Ann Arbor, 1971; B. Ham-