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Paradise and Paradigm: Key Symbols in Persian Christianity and the Baha'i Faith (Studies in the Babi and Baha'i Religions, V. 10)

Christopher Buck

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- In a novel approach that the author terms "symbolic paradigm analysis," *Paradise and Paradigm* offers a "theoretically modular" systematic comparison of two "Persian" religions: early Syriac Christianity as the foundation of the East Syrian "Church of the East" (the Nestorian Church of Persia) and the Baha'i Faith, a new world religion.
- The author compares the hymns of the greatest poet of early Christianity, Saint Ephrem the Syrian, and the richly imagistic writings of the founder of the Baha'i religion, Baha'u'llah.
- The book employs an original analytic technique in the creation of "symbolic profiles" constructed on Ninian Smart's dimensional model of religion.
- As Buck skillfully demonstrates, formal similarities between any two religions are best comprehended in terms of paradigmatic differences, which nuance all parallels through a process of symbolic transformation.
- Buck also shows the communal reflexivity of paradise imagery in representing the ideal faith-community in both traditions.

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