



BOOK SUMMARY

UFOs: God's Chariots?

By Ted Peters

UFOs--God's Chariots? uncovers and exposes the clandestine spiritual dimensions within the UFO phenomenon. Although individual experiences and public discussion of alien contact are routinely described in scientific language with their political ramifications, a close examination shows that religious sensibilities are coming to expression. Human yearning for "transcendent contact" and "saving knowledge" filter our experiences

and our interpretations. More than merely *unidentified* flying objects, UFOs vibrate with transcendence, omniscience, perfection, and redemption.

The first edition of *UFOs--God's Chariots?* was published in 1977. The central thesis of the first edition of *UFOs--God's Chariots?* remains sound, namely, the UFO phenomenon exposes an unconscious cultural tendency to translate traditional religious or spiritual sensibilities into scientific or materialist language and categories. In short, today's flying saucers replace yesterday's angels. So, this central theme continues to serve as the backbone connecting all the ribs in the second edition. A few new ribs will be added, however.

Three new ribs deserve mention. The first is increased attention given to government conspiracy. The notion that the U.S. government along with other national governments have been managing information and even withholding evidence of alien crashes is co-original with the phenomenon itself. It begins already in 1947. The second edition gives an entire chapter to this matter and expands on its political significance.

The second rib is an expansion of models of interpretation from three to four. In the first edition, close encounters of the third kind could be categorized according to (1) the political model: the interstellar diplomat; (2) the scientific model: the research scientist; or (3) the religious model: the celestial savior. The second edition adds a model to account for the more traumatic abductions: (4) the hybridizer.

With regard to the hybridizer model, the second edition offers a treatment of the abductions reported after 1985. These are the traumatic abductions that include impregnation and the birth of hybrid babies. This category of close encounters was virtually unknown when the first edition was published in 1977. It is new. It deserves focused attention. On the surface the hybridizer model differs from the celestial savior model. The hybridizer experience appears strictly negative, whereas earlier experiences with the celestial savior were either neutral or positive. A closer look at the hybridizer, however, will show a more intimate relationship to the celestial savior than meets the eye.

The third rib is a brief summary of *The Peters ETI Religious Crisis Survey*. This survey tests the hypothesis: in the event that we on Earth make contact with an intelligent extraterrestrial civilization, our historic religious traditions will face a crisis and collapse. This survey of self-identified believers--Roman Catholic, mainline Protestants, evangelical Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Mormons, and Buddhists--shows that this thesis is not confirmed. On the basis of this survey, we can safely say that the majority of religious believers will put out the welcome mat for new space neighbors.