

relates to *Flying Saucer Review*. In the light of the sort of things that the MUFON UFO JOURNAL has been saying about us lately, our readers may find Dr Vallée's comments not totally devoid of interest:-

STRAND: What do you think is missing from the historical analysis?

VALLÉE: Two things: a sense of the slowly-changing positions of the key researchers rather than the big, sensational events; and the international perspective. American historians of the field have looked exclusively at the U.S. scene, probably because they had to define the subject narrowly to keep it manageable. But it was always apparent to us from the beginning that the problem could only be tackled at an international level.

STRAND: Give me some examples of that.

VALLÉE: Just look at the foreign individuals and organizations that have had a major impact. People like Olavo Fontes in Brazil, or the British *Flying Saucer Review* in London. No U.S.

magazine has ever compared with it, although a lot of money has been squandered on flashy publications that disappeared quickly...

STRAND: Obviously you think there is something wrong with U.S. research into UFOs. What is it? A parochial attitude?

VALLÉE: Too much talk and not enough research.

*All of which puts me in mind of the day when, on behalf of FSR, I went to welcome Dr J. Allen Hynek for the very first time, on the occasion of (possibly) his first visit to Britain. I took him to lunch at a hotel in Kensington, and in the course of the meal he told me that the U.S. Air Force had for years done their best to prevent him seeing the foreign UFO reports that were coming in from all over the world, and that it was consequently only when he began to see my translations of foreign reports, from ten languages, published regularly in FSR, that he realized that, whatever its ultimate nature might turn out to be, the "UFO Phenomenon" was at any rate global, and not limited to North America.*

EDITOR

## A VISIT TO NAZCA

*By Omar Fowler, FSR Consultant*

Our colleague Omar Fowler, who used to live in Surrey and ran the S.I.G.A.P. UFO Investigation Group (now taken over by another FSR Consultant, Paul Whitehead), is currently living near Barcelona, in Spain. He has just returned from a trip to South America, where he was able to fulfil a life-long dream of seeing the Nazca Lines and Figures, and where he also met the famous German lady Dr. Maria Reiche, who has devoted her entire life to the study of all these strange forms and markings on the Peruvian Desert. Omar has sent us this very interesting account of what he saw.

EDITOR

I was fortunate recently in being able to fulfil one of my life-time ambitions when I visited Peru in May of this year (1988), and had the opportunity to explore and fly over the famous "Lines" and "Figures" of the Nazca Plain (around 14° 53 S., 74° 54 W.)

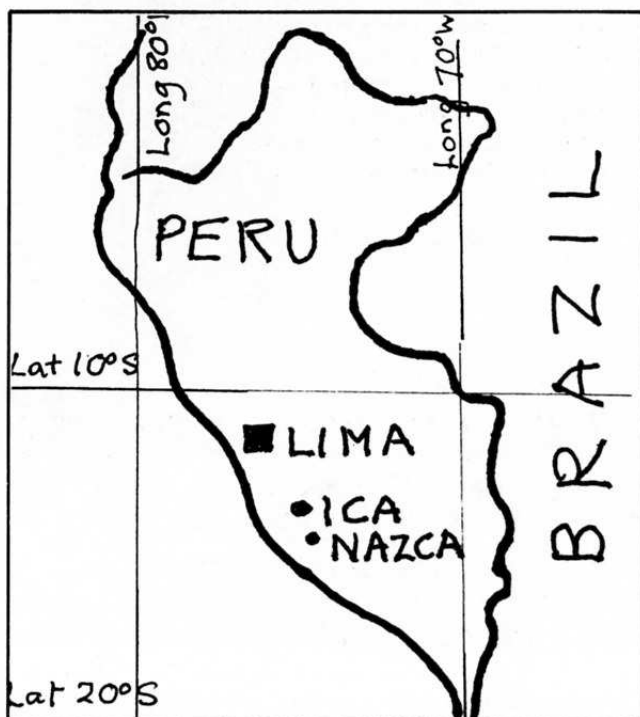
The road journey from Lima to Ica and then on to Nazca turned out to be a hair-raising adventure on tracks that rapidly deteriorated as the trip progressed. White crosses at the side of the road marked particularly dangerous points where various persons had been killed in accidents. At one bad corner up in the mountains, seven black crosses showed a spot where seven people had apparently misjudged the bend and disappeared into the rocky valley below.

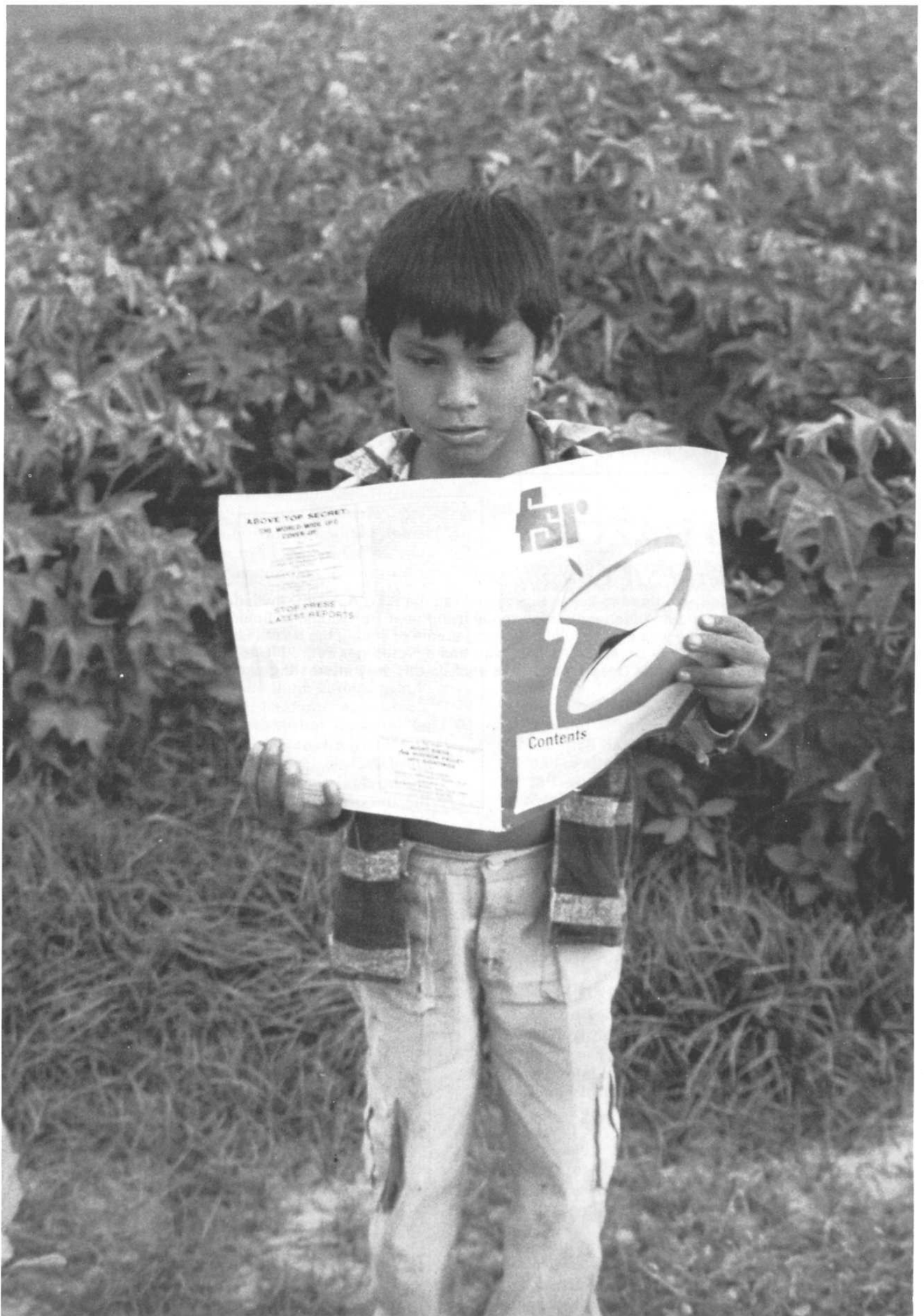
Finally the battered old Peruvian V8 "Chevy" taxi arrived on the Nazca Plain, and we pulled up next to an observation tower that had been constructed beside the highway. This tower is some fifteen metres in height and gives a panoramic view of the desert. It was possible to make out a number of distant lines and part of a geoglyph figure nearby, but it was not until later in the day, when I flew over the Plain, that the figures and lines were completely visible.

The first impression was of the large number of lines that criss-cross over the desert, far more than I had expected. The famous figures became visible one after another, as the pilot flew over them in his *Cessna* for probably the umpteenth time this year. The figures were far duller than they appear in many photographs, and were a little difficult to distinguish. There were now car-tracks showing up, crossing over many of the Lines and some of the Figures. I was later to learn from Dr. Maria Reiche that these tyre-tracks were some fifteen years old, and had been caused by

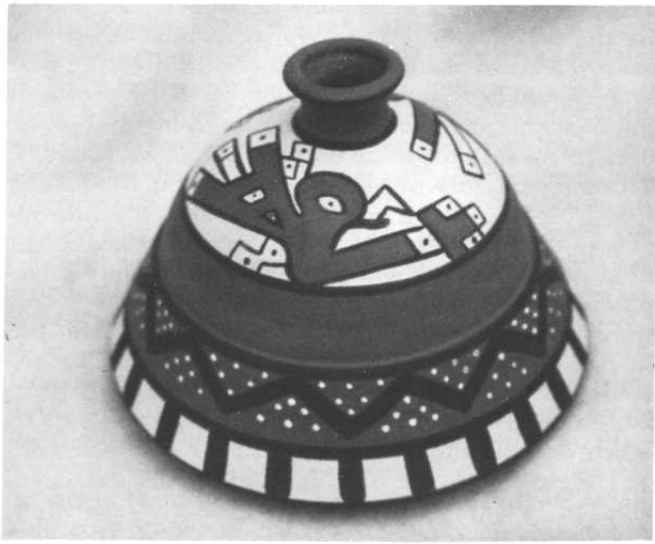
an influx of tourists after the sensational treatment given to the Lines and Figures in the books by Erich von Däniken.

The careless drivers had badly damaged several of the lines, and their tyre-tracks would probably stay there for another two or three hundred years. I photographed numerous figures, mainly for my own interest, as they have been professionally taken by aerial cameramen many times. The desert was criss-crossed



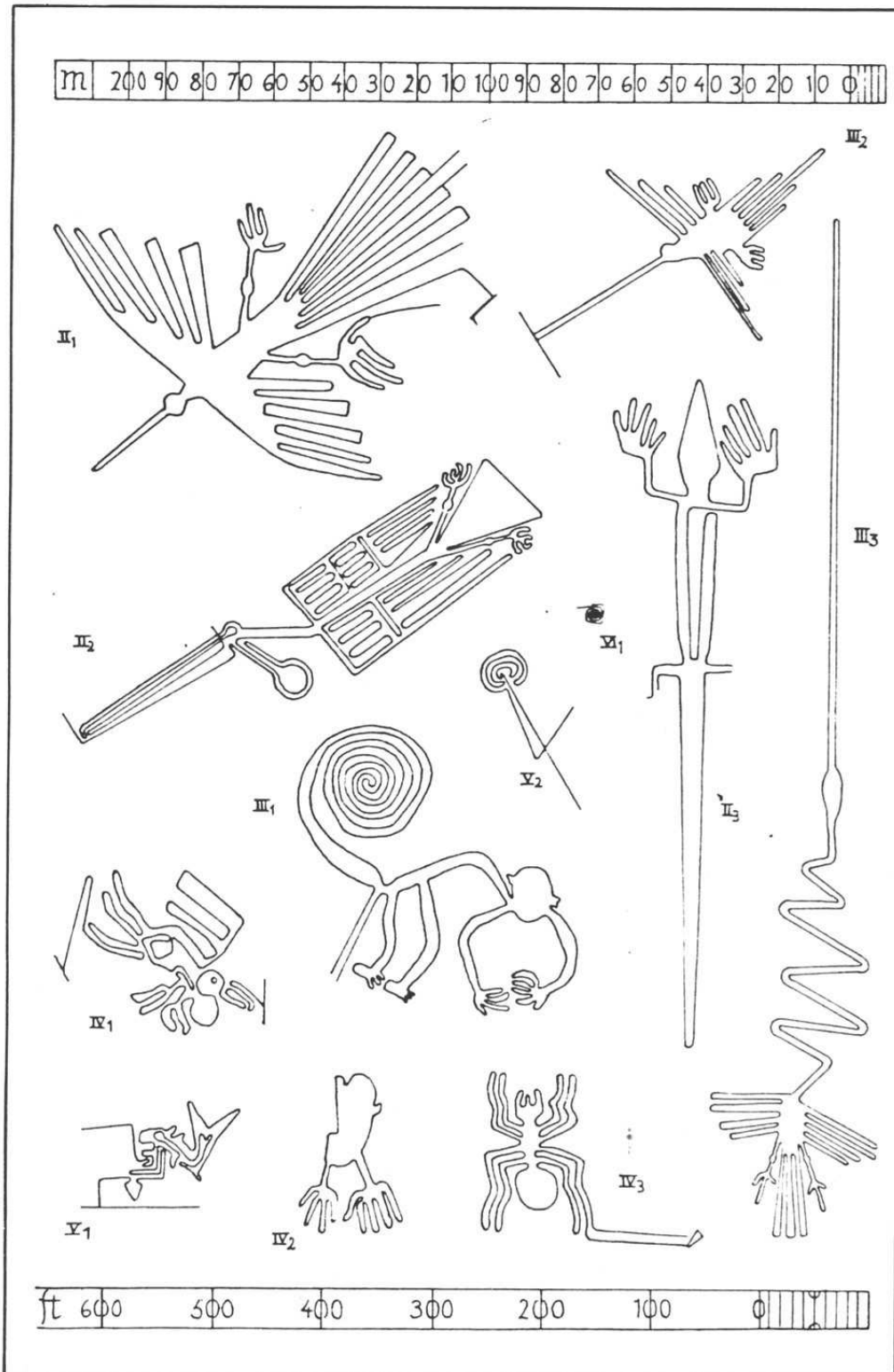


A Peruvian boy pauses from his work in the Nazca cotton fields to read his latest copy of FSR (Photo: O. Fowler).



with dried up river-beds meandering across the Plain. Although these old river-beds looked as though they had only been formed a year or so ago, they pre-date the lines and figures and are probably over 1500 years old. The whole scene was quite remarkable. Who had made the lines and figures, and for what purpose?

I had booked into the Nazca Tourist Hotel for a few days, and as soon as we landed, I intended to try and find the whereabouts of Dr. Maria Reiche. I had meanwhile already heard various theories about the lines and figures from Dr. Javier Cabrera Darquea, a person that I had travelled many miles to see. He had his own ideas, one of which was the fact that the "runway" lines on the Nazca Plain were old launching sites for spacecraft! It was not so bizarre as one might think, for Dr Javier Cabrera produced pieces of iron and other ores from the Nazca Plain to explain his



Some of the bird and animal drawings from Maria Reiche's book.

theory. When held close together, the opposite poles of the materials repelled each other. Had the inhabitants of Nazca discovered linear motive power thousands of years ago? He next showed me a model clay vessel closely resembling a "UFO" (see photo). This had been found along with many other artifacts some year ago, and the original was now in the Aeronautical Museum of Peru. The Nazca people reproduced all of their feelings and thoughts in their pottery, ranging from the birth of man, to the feelings expressed in facial features and depicted on various artifacts. In this instance, the dome shaped object appeared to be a craft. Its flight capability was signified by the bird emblem portrayed around the dome, and stars appear to be shown around the circumference lower down.

Could this have been their interpretation of a UFO seen many thousands of years ago? Had the craft landed and contacted the people of Nazca, and were the huge figures in the desert and on the hillsides a signal to bring down the UFOs? We know that many of the old Andean folklore tales speak of "Gods coming down from the sky". There are theories that they taught the people the rudiments of agriculture, and certainly the weaving of cotton, grown in the area, has been depicted in some of the oldest line drawings visible on the desert.

Finally one evening, I was fortunate in meeting Dr. Maria Reiche. I had requested an interview, and this took place in her hotel room, with her sister Renate and a young Peruvian companion nearby. I was sorry to learn that Dr. Reiche, who was now aged 85, had a stroke fairly recently. She was now almost completely blind and could only take her evening walk with the

assistance of two companions to support her. Fortunately she was still in complete command of her senses, and we chatted about her work over the past forty years, her meticulous study of the figures and lines, and her mathematical work on trying to find the unit of measurement used by the ancient Nazcans. This subsequently turned out to be what Dr. Reiche has called "the elb," a measurement taken from the elbow to the end of the fingers. (A unit of measurement used within recent memory by old people in various parts of the globe.) The Nazca lines, she believed, were mainly astronomical in importance, but the figures were, even now, still a mystery. She had calculated that one abstract design had 365 angles in it, one for every day of the year, but there was still so much work and research to be done.

The damage to the lines and figures was discussed, and Dr. Reiche pointed out the difficulty in keeping the figures clear and undamaged. It was far too easy for a driver to turn off the road across the Plain and to damage the lines and figures. The road was unfenced, and completely open. There were indeed large notices, warning of dire consequences if you strayed from the road: imprisonment and large fines. But who was there to enforce the security of the figures on the Plain? I was amazed to learn that although Dr. Maria Reiche has been honoured by the Peruvian Government and now has a home for life at the Tourist Hotel, she alone is striving to protect the ground drawings of Nazca. She employs three motorcyclists to patrol the road in an effort to stop people defacing the figures. The cost of this operation is paid for solely by the  
(continued on Page iii)

## BOOK REVIEW

*Dr V. V. Rubtsov and*

*Dr A. D. Ursul*

***Problema Vnezemnykh Tsivilizatsii: Filosofsko-Metodologicheskie Aspekty.* (In Russian). English title: *The Problem of Extraterrestrial Civilizations: Philosophical-Methodological Aspects.* Publishers: "Shtiintsa" (Science Publishing House), Kishinev, Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, USSR. Second and Enlarged Edition, 1987.**

The first-named of the two authors of this new Soviet book on alien civilizations is Dr. V. V. Rubtsov of Kharkov, Capital of the Ukrainian Republic, who as FSR readers will no doubt know, is one of our valued Consultants. (See his letter, about the book, on page iii of FSR 30/3 [1985]). The book appears under the official patronage of the scientific committee on philosophical and social problems of science and technology which in turn is under the Commission for the History of Science and Technology of the Academy of Sciences of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, and appears with the recommendation of four eminent academicians who have read it and given it their blessing. The book, with XIII pages of introduction plus 278 pages of close text, 38 pages of copious footnotes, and 1½ page summaries in English and French, has eight chapters, grouped as follows:-

1. The History of the Development and the Contemporary State of the Problem of Extraterrestrial Civilizations.

2. Some Astrosociological Notions and Hypotheses.
3. Existence, Search, Contact.
4. The Communicative Aspect of Contact with a Civilization.
5. Contact as Cognition.
6. Direct Contacts between Cosmic Civilizations.
7. The Problem of "Palaeovisits" (Visits in the Past).
8. The Problem of Extraterrestrial Civilizations and the Illusions of the Bourgeois Consciousness.

As it stands, I am sure that the book is an admirable and utterly comprehensive piece of work, meticulous and carefully thought out as most Soviet scientific publications are. We therefore extend our hearty congratulations to authors Rubtsov and Ursul for having been able to bring out this work in Russia.

But since I do not believe in the "E.T." Theory, and consider that there is so far no evidence whatsoever that any alien beings from Outer Space have ever visited Planet Earth, I very much regret to say that I do not perceive that this book really has much bearing on the problems that are of interest to *Flying Saucer Review*.

The book deals with the theme of possible *Exobiology* — that is to say, with the question of whether other civilizations exist OUT THERE. On that score I must say most emphatically that I agree with the two authors and indeed, I think, with the vast majority of Soviet scientists, in accepting that it is *wellnigh certain* that the entire vast Cosmos teems with life and intelligence, much of it possibly of an (for us) unimaginably high level, throughout its whole, seemingly endless extent.