

# Cave discoveries in the USSR - 1990 (from the West to the East)

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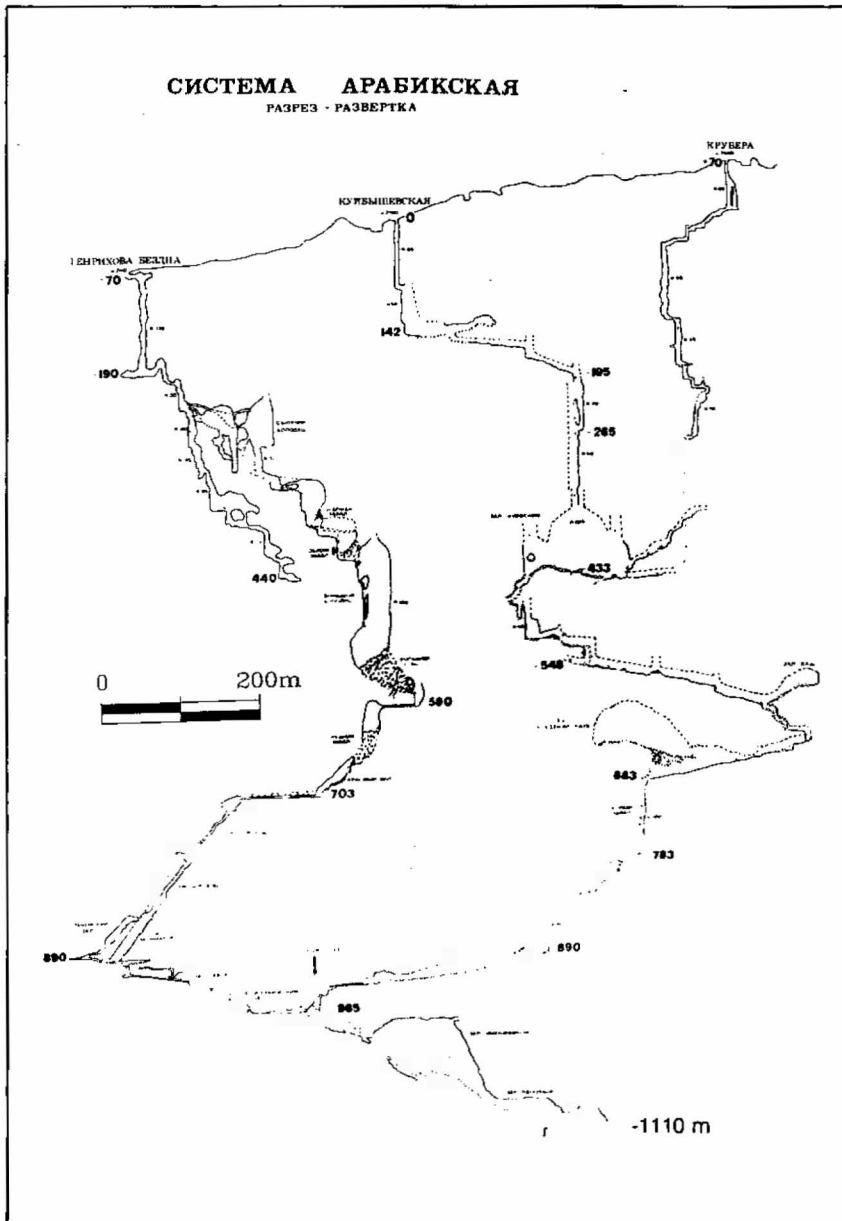
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## Resumen

Se presentan las principales actividades espeleológicas y nuevos descubrimientos realizados en la Unión Soviética durante 1990.

En la región de Podolia (Ucrania), famosa por su karst yesífero, se ha investigado en

una nueva área de la cavidad yesífera de Mlynky descubriéndose nuevas galerías dando a la cavidad un desarrollo total de 23 Km. La Optimisticheskaya alcanza ya los 178 Km de desarrollo tras explorar dos nuevas zonas en su interior. En los Cárpatos se continúa trabajando en la cavidad Red Stone (900 m / -56 m) excavada en



Sistema Arabikskaja

conglomerados. En la península de Crimea (Ucrania) tres espeleobuceadores alcanzaron los 3.5 Km de recorrido en la resurgencia Aljoshina Voda. Distintos sifones han sido explorados en las cavidades del Cáucaso (Universitetskaja, Underground Khesta...). En el macizo de Arabika, la cavidad Arabikskaja (-1100 m) se ha unido a una cavidad cercana (Golubaja) sin variar su profundidad. En el mismo macizo, la Tcherepashja alcanza -550 m pero con dificultades para su continuación debido a un caos de bloques final. En el macizo de Aton continúan las exploraciones en el sistema Khabju (8.2 Km) siendo ésta, la segunda cavidad más larga del Cáucaso. En Asia Central se han realizado distintas expediciones en las que colaboraron espeleólogos ingleses. La exploración de la cueva Dark Star (4000 / -168 m) debe realizarse tras una dura escalada de dos días, para poder superar una pared vertical de 150 m de altura, donde se encuentran colgadas las bocas de acceso. Igualmente, continúa la exploración de la cueva Festival'naja (12.5 Km / -600 m) y la Boj-Bulok con nuevas galerías y pozos. En esta última, se han explorado nuevos tramos aguas arriba (+210 m) con lo que la cavidad pasa a tener 1368 m de desnivel. El punto más bajo de esta cavidad es impenetrable debido a la presencia de un caos de bloques. Sin embargo, la cavidad podría aumentar en unos 300 m su desnivel si se conectan nuevos sectores superiores.

Finalmente, se incluye un listado de las cavidades más importantes de URSS clasificadas por desarrollo y profundidad.

**PODOLIA (Ukraine).** Cavers from Chortkov town have surveyed new area in Mlynky gypsum cave (23 km). In Optimisticheskaja cave L'vov cavers explored two new areas (900 m each) in "Behind Lakes" area and have surveyed new passages in "Fresh Water" area (1,1 km). Total development is now 178 km.

**CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS (Ukraine).** Local cavers and L'vov cavers have surveyed conglomerate cave Red Stone, discovered in 1988 (900 m/-56 m). Near Skole town they explored some tectonic caves in sandstone, biggest is Prokhodnoj Dvor cave (500/-40 m) with it's 3 entrances.

**CRIMEA (Ukraine).** Dolgorukovskoe Plateau. Three cave divers have extended Aljoshina Voda cave resurgence (3.5 km). Behind S4 (80/-15 m) about 800 m of meander have been explored to 65. In the neighboring cave-resurgence Eni-Sala-3 S2 (115/-17 m) has been pushed to the gallery with new sumps.

**N.CAUCASUS.** In December 1989 two cave divers have explored new passages behind sump at +215 m in Universitetskaja cave resurgence (North Osstia) and have surveyed 1.1 km. Cave is now

### LARGEST CAVES IN THE USSR (as of December 1990)

The Longest		The Deepest	
1. Optimisticheskaya	178000	V. Pantjukina	-1508
2. Ozjornaja	107300	Sniezhnaja-Mezhonnogo	-1370
3. Zolushka	82000	Boj-Bulok (-1158, +210)	1368
4. Kap-Kutan/Promezhutochnaja	54000	V.Iljukhina	-1240
5. Bol'shaja Oreshnaja	42000	Arabikskaja	-1110
6. Mlynky	23000	Kievskaja	-990
7. Kristal'naja	22000	Moskovskaja	-970
8. Sniezhnaja-Mezhonnogo	19000	Napra	-956
9. Kulogorskaja/Troja	14100	Pionerskaja	-815
10. Krasnaja	14000	Grafskij Proval	-780
11. Festival'naja	12500	Forel'naja	-740
12. Gaurdaksaja	11010	Kaskadnaja	-630
13. Vorontsovskaja	10640	Festival'naja	-620
14. Jashchic Pandory	10100	Ural'skaja	-565
15. Sumgan Kutuck	9860	Vesennja	-550
16. Divja	9750	Tcherepashja	-550
17. Khabju	8200	Gandy	-540
18. Verteba	7820	Parjashchaja Ptiza	-535
19. Kizelovskaja	7600	Rutchejnaja/Zabludshikh	-510
20. Kinderlinskaja	6700	Osennaja/Nazarovskaja	-500

4470/+305 m.

**N.W. CAUCASUS.** In February Krasnojarsk divers Chanchikov and Minenkov have dived in cave resurgence Underground Khosta (**Vorontsovskij Ridge**). This 200/-48 m sump with an average depth of 10-12 m dropped suddenly in the end.

**W. CAUCASUS. Arabika Massif.** Moldavian cavers have extended Berchil'skaja cave to -450 m.

Children caving groups from Kiev and Plotava have pushed Golubaja cave and joined it to Arabikskaja system at -250 m. The system has received third entrance but it's total depth has not been changed. Cavers from Irkutsk discovered new obstacle at -470 m in MN-53 (Tcherepashja) cave and have stopped with boulder choke behind long meander at -550 m.

**Bzybskij Ridge. In Khipsta Massif.** Cavers from Kharkov have extended Bashko cave (3000/-360 m). Moscow cavers have discovered

red Z.O.V. cave (-250 m). Veterok cave has been extended to -270 m by cavers from Moscow University. They continued exploration of Aleksinskogo cave in **Dzyshra Massif**. Two new branches of the cave have been surveyed from -80 to -150 m and from -400 to 465 m. Bottom sump (20/-15 m) at -463 m has been explored to a constriction.

Krasnojarsk cave divers continued exploration of Mchishta resurgence (4000/-73, +90 m). In the entrance sump (S1) P. Minenkov and A. Skachkov have dived into -63 m (underwater pit) and have tried to get bottom with 10 m long rope. The pit is continues. Some new passages in 2nd air bell of S1 have been surveyed. End sump of this branch has been explored to 120/-20 m. The attempt to push S2 (-48 m deep) has been most difficult. Peter Minenkov has overcome 320 m of the sump in second dive. He has stopped at -45 m.

**New Atom Massif.** During winter interclub expedition in Khabju cave resurgence 5 km of new passages have been surveyed. It is second longest cave in the Caucasus with it's 8.2 km, and longest Soviet cave explored behind sumps. In november the attempt has been done to push entrance sump (75/-15 m) in neighboring resurgence Black Water.

**CENTRAL ASIA.** In August Novosivirsk and Bulgarian cavers have descended to -400 m in cave by A. Zaidman, **Polakhan Plateau**. During September expedition Tashkent cavers have provided additional 100 m in depth to the next constriction.

In the **Bajsoontau Ridge** expeditions of Ural, Uzbekistan and British cavers have taken place. In the north of **Khodga-Gur-Gur-Ata Massif** APEX expedition (Eldon Pothole Club + Speleocentre) have surveyed 34 new entrances. Three new large caves been explored.

red. Getting to one of 4 entrances of Dark Star cave (4000/-168m) have taken two days of climbing. These entrances are located at 35550-3600 m a.s.l. and 150 m above wall foot, this unique cave has long gallery with 1 km of ice river ( $t = -3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

Prima cave (228 m) has been explored to next pit at -210m. Another expedition of British and Ural cavers continued exploration of Festival'naja cave (12500/-620 m) and Boj-Bulok cave. Two new

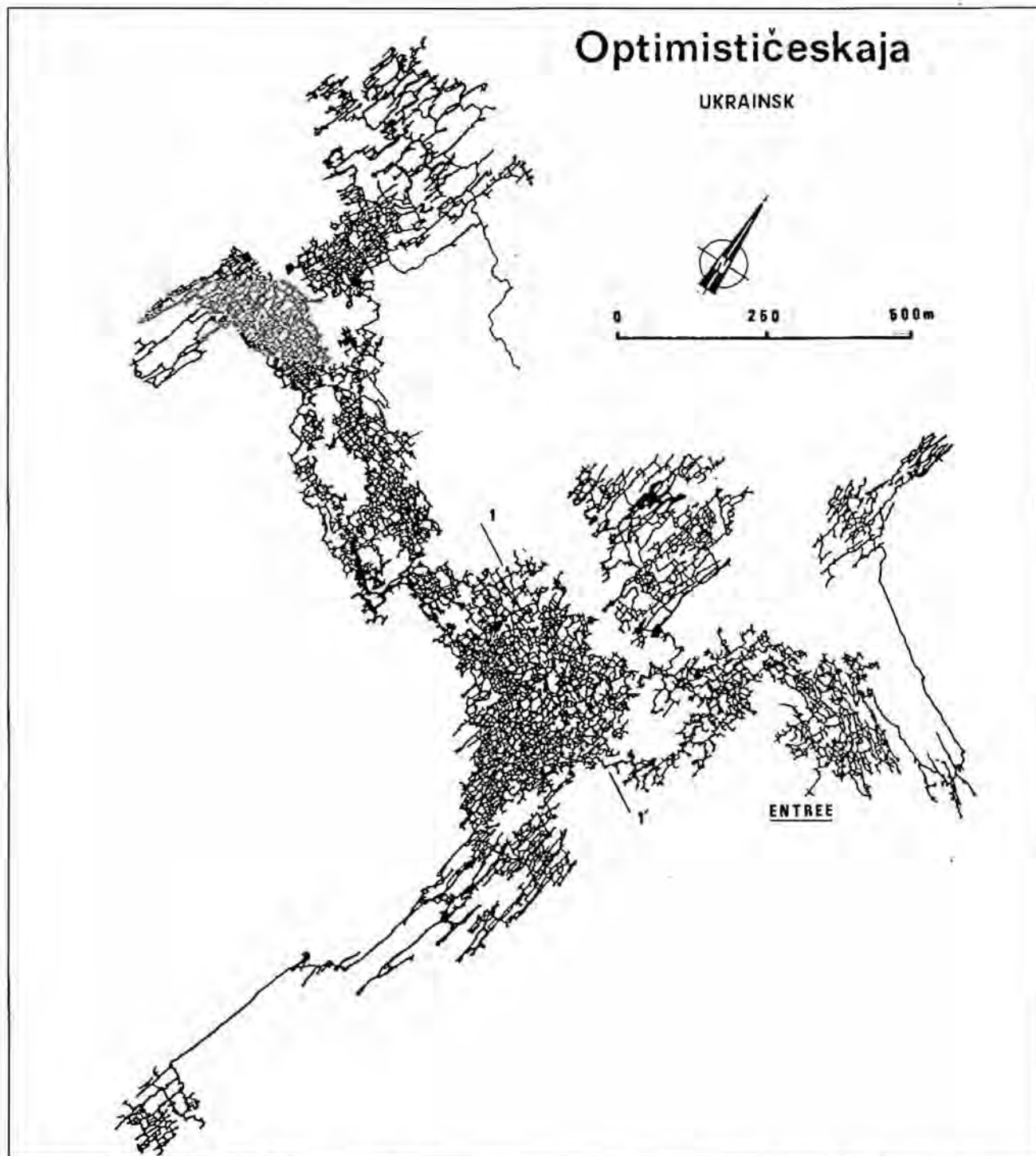
branches have been explored in Boj-Bulok: ascending passage from -600 to -200 m; and descending passage from +30 (according to main entrance) to -120 m, where new gallery has been discovered. The latter has been explored downstream to squeeze at -400 m upstream to +210 m. Depth of the cave is 1368 m (-1158, +210 m). Sumped boulder choke at the cave bottom is unpenetrable but there is a possibility to increase total depth

up to 300 m from the top.

**SAJAN** (Syberia). Krasnojarsk cavers have surveyed new passages in bol'shaja Oreshnaja cave (42 Km) developed in conglomerate.

They discovered two new entrances of the cave.

**ALTAJ**. (Syberia). Novosibirsk cavers have extended Duet cave from -76 m to -145 m during November expedition. ■



Optimističeskaja (178 Km). La segunda cavidad más grande del mundo y la primera en materiales yesíferos. (Tomado de Courbon, P. y Chabert (1986): Atlas des grandes cavités mondiales)