

# SPOKEN WORD – DOCUMENTARY

## GEORGIA

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**SW-DOC-GE1** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics 1979

### НОВОАФОНСКАЯ ПЕЩЕРА \*

Spoken Word – Tourism – Journalism – Geology – History

**Scr:** (None – Text impromptu)

**Intrv:** (?)

**Speleo:** (?)

**Prod. Co:** Кругозор (Krugozor [Outlook] Magazine);  
Moscow

**Photo:** А. Лидова (A; Lidova)

**Time:** (?)

**EP:** КРУГОЗОР 7 – 79

**Label:** Кругозор 79 – 2

**Spec:** 7" 33rpm (Flexible thin disc) (Sd 2)

**Notes:** This was a 20-page nationally distributed monthly magazine in the USSR which included printed articles with photos and, in the back, a section with six flexible blue plastic 33rpm discs. The whole magazine (18.5 x 19 cm) was pierced by a spindle hole in the middle and in order to play a disc all you had to do was carefully fold back the inappropriate pages and discs so that the disc you wanted to hear was on the top. Then you had to line up the holes and squeeze the whole magazine onto the spindle of your turntable.

This disc and article promotes the Georgian show cave, Novy Afon Cave (also called Akhali Atoni Cave), which in 1984 was the largest show cave in the Soviet Union. (Soule 1984) Since “the collapse of the Soviet Union and with all the internal troubles of Georgia, both Russian and international tourism almost came to an end and the cave has very little visitors.” (Duckeck 2011) The photos here are from a Soviet postal stationery for this Georgian show cave, dated 1979.

Unfortunately it was not possible to understand the article or the spoken text of this flexi-disc.

The article is titled "Чудо Абхазии (Chudo Abkhazii)" (The Abkhazian Wonder). (Kisseljov 1989) The text of a printed interview included three interior cave shots: one of a beige stalagmite, another of a nice formation room (printed upside down), and the third of a solution feature, probably a ceiling pendant also printed upside down. There is an inset photo probably of the cave administrator or a geologist who is interviewed in the printed text and on the flexi-disc.

**Ref:** Duckeck, Jochen 2011, Novoafonskaya (Nova Afon Cave),  [showcaves](#)

Новоафонская пещера (New Athos Cave), (in Russian), [Wikipedia](#) & (in English), [Wikipedia](#)

Новоафонская пещера, Photos & map of cave, [Google.fr](#)

Kisseljov, Vladimir 1989, Letter postmarked 23 Oct 1989, Moscow, Donation of Disc

Novoafonskaya (Nova Afon Cave), [Abkahlazia.travel](#)

Soule, Gary K., Akhali Atoni Cave, *NSS News*, v. 42, n. 11, Nov. 1984, p. 326-328



Грузинская ССР, Абхазская АССР, Новоафонская пещера.  
საქართველოს სსრ, აფხაზეთის ავტონომიური რესპუბლიკის, აფხაზეთის სოფლის მეურნეობის მინისტრის კაბინეტი.  
Ниртэпшытэи ССР, Афэнтэи АССР, Афэнтэи пещэри.



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**SW-DOC-GE2** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics 1985

### СПЕЛЕОЛОГН \*

Spoken Word – Journalism – Geology – History

**Scr:** (None – Text impromptu)

**Intrv:** (?)

**Speleos:** (?)

**Prod. Co:** Кругозор (Krugozor [Outlook] Magazine); Moscow

**Liner Notes:** Л. ШВЕЦОВА (L. Shvetsova)

**Photo:** А. Ефремова & В. Киселева (A. Efremov & V. Kiseleva)

**Time:** (?)

**EP:** КРУГОЗОР 1 – 85

**Label:** Кругозор 85 - 4

**Spec:** 7" 33rpm (Flexible thin disc) (Sd 4)

**Notes:** This magazine-flexi-disc, entitled "Спелеологи (sic)" should read "Спелеология" [Speleology], with its article "Сезам, Откройся!" [Open, Sesame].

It deals with the important Vladimir Ilyukhin Cave System on the Arabika Massif in the western Caucasus Mountains of the USSR.

This pit system was named after a Moscow physicist and caver who was "an inspiring leader of Soviet caving during its principal organizational phase, 1955-75." (Ford 1987) (Not to be confused with the Soviet General Vladimir Ilyukhin who was noted test pilot.) A series of pits were descended to the first sump at – 950m. This was dived for 40m in 1985 and a short horizontal passage was found before a second sump. In 2004, the actual mapped depth of the Ilyukhina System was 1,240m (4,068ft.).

The most remarkable characteristic of this massif and the nearby Bsybsky Massif is the great vertical magnitude of the karst groundwater drainage. This has proved to be up to 2300m from sinking streams to springs in both massifs (Klimchouk 2004) thus establishing these as the deepest (incompletely explored) karst water systems in the world. In this Arabika Massif is also located the Krubera (Voronya) Cave System, the deepest known cave in the world. The current depth as of September 2007 was carefully measured at – 2,191m (7,188ft.).

Unfortunately it was not possible to understand the article or the spoken text of this flexi-disc.

The text of the magazine article about this pit cave includes five photos: one of the huge doline entrance with a sheer mountain in the distance and three cavers sitting on the grass of the high plateau, an interior shot showing two cavers standing on a steep slope which is partially covered with ice stalagmites (shown here – the spindle hole runs through this photo just in front of the caver in middle), and three inset photos showing three of the Soviet cavers who were involved in this exploration – one examining a map, one closing his kit bag, and the third, in full dry-suit gear, holding a piton hammer presumably in the process of rigging a pitch.

**Ref:** Courbon, Paul & Chabert, Claude 1986, *Atlas des grandes gouffres du monde*, p. 225

Ford, Derek 1987, *Soviet Caving*, *NSS News*, v. 45, n. 6, June 1987, p. 123-124

Kisseljov, Vladimir 1989, Letter postmarked 23 Oct 1989, Moscow, Donation of Disc

Klimchouk, Alexander 2004, Caucasus, Georgia, in Gunn, John (Editor), *Encyclopedia of Caves and Karst Science*, Fitzroy Dearborn, New York, p. 201

Krubera (Voronya) Cave System, [Wikipedia](#)

Yefremov, Alexander P. 2005, Vladimir Ilyukhin Cave System, [speleogenesis](#)



[caveinspiredmusic.com](http://caveinspiredmusic.com)