Asian Alpine Associates

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Alpine climber Kei Taniguchi, the first woman ever to win the Piolet d’Or (Golden Ice Axe) in 2009 for climbing Samurai Direct route on Kamet (7,756m / WI5+, M5+, 1800m southeast face) in India, made several first ascents in the Himalayas and Alaska, slipped 700m from the summit of Mt. Kuro (1,984m) of the Daisetsuzan range in Hokkaido, Japan when untying her rope after completing the route, and found dead on the 22nd of December 2015, at the age of 43.

At 155cm, she was relatively small but had strong mind which is the most important ability for an alpine climber. Her interest in mountain climbing began at the time she was in elementary school when her father took her to the local mountains. Also by reading books especially influenced by...
Naomi Uemura, a Japanese arctic explorer active in 1970s. She was world-class alpine climber but preferred to define herself as a “traveler” or “explorer” than a “climber”. Since she climbed with curiosity in exploring the beauty of nature and local culture, it is not hard for us to imagine that she did not like to be categorized just as a “climber.”

She attended Meiji University, the same university Uemura graduated from, and joined the Cycling Club but her interest in climbing mountains was already in her mind. “I always felt the urge to climb when I saw mountains while riding.” After graduating she joined a local mountaineering club and started her climbing career. In 2001, climbed Denali (6,194m) via the west buttress and found herself to be strong at high altitudes. During the same time also joined several adventure races and her name became to be known as one of the top female athletes in the field. “Adventure races are what taught me team dynamics.” Not only the race, she was strong in the mountains but said she never train herself. It was a mystery among friends, but one winter day, received a message saying she went for “walk” and soloed 3 routes just because the “weather was beautiful.”. Usually normal climbers climb these routes with rope, one per day. “I don’t like competing.” she said. “I find climbing interesting because it forces me to deal with strengths and weaknesses inside myself and not because I must or for the sake of competition.”

Year 2001, when she first climbed Denali, was a big change year of her life. She quit her permanent job after 2 years of working and became a freelance company facilitator and mountain tour guide altering her lifestyle to where to spend most of the time in the mountains. This set the stage for the next stride of her career. Around this period, another important change was occurring in the Japanese alpine climbing community. A group of next generation of young alpine climbers, including Yusuke Sato and Yokoyama “Jumbo” Katsutaka (who would later be known world-wide as the “Girigiri Boys”) started to become active. Kei was well accepted and loved among the group and they shared experiences and technique with each other which accelerates to deepen her alpine climbing skills which is difficult to master just from “textbooks.”

A few years later, Kei embarked on a number of expeditions with long time climbing partner Kazuya Hiraide. In 2004, the north west side of Spantik (7,028m), and the north face of Laila Peak (6,096m) in Pakistan. In 2005 second ascent of the east ridge of Mustagh Ata (7,546m) in China, and the new route on the north face of Shivling (6,543m) in India. And in 2008 the new route on the southeast face of the remote peak of Kamet (7,756m) in India, for which they won the 2009 Piolet d’Or. They continued with attempts in 2009 unclimbed east face up until 100m under from the summit of Gaurishankar (7,134m) in China, and in 2011 first traverse from south to west side of Naimona’nyi (7,694m) in China. In 2013, they summited Diran (7,266m) from west ridge and tried Shispare (7,611m) unclimbed south west face up to 5,800m, in Pakistan.
She loved Alaska and visited several times. In 2008 climbed 4 hard routes around Ruth glacier including second ascent via the Worrior’s Way (VM5R A0, 21 pitches) on Mt.Grosvenor with Hiroki Suzuki. And in 2011 traversed Kahiltna Peak via unstable knife-edge ridge with Yasuhiro Hanatani, trying to retrace all the way up to Denali to commemorate her friends who were lost in 2008 while attempting an enchainment of the Kahiltna Peak and the Cassin Ridge.

From 2013, she partnered with Junji Wada. Their first expedition was to Alaska in 2014, 38 days at Ruth glacier without meeting anybody all through the expedition. They climbed new routes named Wasabi Concerto (AI4 M5+ R) and Wasabi Sonatine (WI4 M4) on the northeast buttress of Peak 11,300, Wasabi Prelude (V 60 degrees) on the south face and Wasabi Nocturne (WI4 AI5 M5) on the east face of Mt. Dan Beard. They call the climbs as “Wasabi quartette” and were nominated for the Piolet d’Or Asia 2014. Then in the autumn of 2015 they attempted the unclimbed peak Pandra (6,850m) in Nepal which were unable to summit on and were planning to try again the following post monsoon in 2016.

Kei leading around 6,950m of Gaurishankar (7,134m) in China, 2009  Photo By Kazuya Hiraide

Not only personal, she participated “official” expeditions. For the 8000m “cleaning” expeditions led by Ken Noguchi, she joined as a manager in 2002 and 2003. In 2006 summited Manaslu (8,163m) and in 2007 summited Everest (8,858m) with the team. She loved working with Ken and Sherpa in the expedition but later mentioned “I would choose to attempt silent peaks.” She also led young female climbers’ expedition offered by Japanese Alpine Club to the yet unclimbed Mansail Peak (6,235m) in Nepal in 2014 and led the inexperienced young group to the summit.

She enjoyed life at home in Japan between expeditions. After living in Tokyo for about 20 years, she moved to a small cabin near the Yatsugatake mountain range in 2014. Since she was a fan of art and loved to visit museums mainly locates in Tokyo, she had been hesitant to move but soon after said “I should have moved away from Tokyo earlier to live near the mountains.”. She loved living simply in the woods among the beauty and blessings of nature.

For about 15 years she afforded her living and expeditions by working as freelance company
facilitator and trekking guide. She had several offers by sponsors but refused to be sponsored easily and only selected gears which she found reliable. “I love working as a facilitator,” she said and shared her experiences gained in extreme fields. “I would like to be the best facilitator to navigate people to recognize their personal potential and team dynamics.”

She put extensive effort into finding potential and team dynamics for herself and others. “I carefully choose who to rope with and once we roped together I find the best way as a team to climb.”. In 2009, at the Piolet’s d’Or meeting in Chamonix, she roped with Peter Habeler, who was a hero of hers from his legendary achievements. Mr. Habeler thankfully shared his story. “It was a really tough route I got stuck and Kei leaded us. As it always is with great Individuals like Kei, she took it very lightly, not making any comments about getting stuck.”. She wrote in her diary it was a great experience roping with him and was impressed by his strong spirit to look for future adventure. Since she had experience studying in the US for a year after high school, she had good communication skills, not only speaking English but expressing her thoughts verbally. The next year she was invited again by the Piolet’s d’Or in 2010, as a judge.

Like her climbing style, she often mentioned she prefer not to leave any pitons nor titles behind, even in her life. She was like an artist expressing her passion for the beauty by drawing a line both on the mountains also on her path.

On the 13th of March, 2016, 3 months after her accident, Kei’s memorial was held in Aoyama, Tokyo. Her family and around 500 people from various fields gathered and mourn over the great loss of our friend, world class alpine climber and an artist of life’s journey.


Kei heading unclimbed south face of Naimona’nyi (7,694m) in China, 2011  Photo By Kazuya Hiraide
International Team China-North America 2016
Ice Climbing in Shuangqiao valley, Mt. Siguning Range, Sichuan
Liu yong 劉勇, Sichuan University

International ice climbing team attended the Chinese & North American ice climbing exchanging program conducted in Mt. Siguniang range of Qionglai Mountains, Sichuan, China. The following is a report of Liu yong.

In early February, 2016, a small group of Canadian and American ice climbers which was led by Steven Swenson, a former President of American Alpine Club arrived to the Shuangqiao valley, a most reputed ice climbing field in China. The five foreign climbers joined the team for a 10 days climbing trip with the Chinese ice climbers, which was organized by the Chinese Mountain Club (CMC) and two ice climbers from Hong Kong joined as well.

This was an ice climbing exchanging program between Northern American climbers and Chinese climbers. In October 2015, Daliu (Liu yong), a Chairman of Chinese Mountain Club was invited to attend the Banff mountain film festival in Canada and he met Steven Swenson in Banff, and they met up in Chamonix in 2012 at the Piolet d’Or as Daliu acted as a jury and Steven won the prize for the first ascent of Saser Kangri ll (7518m). The two old friends made a decision that they would start a climbing exchanging program between the Chinese and North American climbers.

Three Chinese strong ice climbers include Daliu, Zhaozhongjun and Bater, and nine members from CMC (Chinese Mountain Club) joined this program held in their home climbing playground, the beautiful Tibetan mountain range.

As soon as they arrived at Shuangqiao valley in the late afternoon, 18th of February, Daliu and Steven Swenson roped up and climbed a 67 meters ice fall called “five colour ice”, Canadian climber Steven Earl Van Sickle and American climber Alexis Manfred Berg climbed a 45 meters WI4+ ice wall (Swiss knife). Both of the two teams finished their climbing before sunset.

As a part of the exchanging program, the northern American climbers gave three days ice climbing course to the members of CMC which finally led those young climbers to successfully climb some long multi-pitches steep ice falls. Most of the young Chinese climbers never climbed outside of China before, and it was probably first time for them to climb with North American ice climbers. It took little longer time than usual for them to exchange their climbing skill and their thought of different ice based on their different language and culture background. But it must be a wonderful experience.

The rest of the 10 days trip, the American and Canadian climbers climbed some attactive vertical ice falls with Daliu, Zhaozhongjun and Bater. They climbed many of the famous ice falls in Shuangqiao
valley that include a famous route “the dragon’s breathe WI6”, and the Northern Americans even explored some of the big ice fall in Changping valley which is next to Shuanqiao valley in the east.

Shuangqiao valley is located in Mt. Siguniang range of Qionglai Mountains, which shares the easternmost rim of the Tibetan high plateau. It is famous as Chinese Alps because of stunning and overwhelming view. There are three valleys in this area and the highest peak is 6250 meters Mt. Siguniang, and there are over 150 high peaks around this mountain range which mostly have steep face and sharp ridge. The climbing history in Mt. Siguniang began in early 1980’s. The Japanese alpinists became the first climbing pioneers and they made many first ascents on these snow covered top. The Doshisha University in Kyoto made the remarkable first ascent of Mr. Siguniang 6250m in 1986. In late 1980’s, some American alpinists started to explore some new routes and new peaks around Mt. Siguniang main peak. Charlie Fowler made some fantastic solo climbs in some very steep peaks.

The first generation of Chinese alpinists to climb here were mostly from Chengdu, Sichuan. They found this playground in early 1990’s and they soon made some amazing and notable first ascent. Daliu and his colleagues showed the leading power in this climbing golden age. Back to 1990’s, Daliu and his friends found many ice falls in Shuangqiao valley when they tried some winter climbs. Some of the ice falls stand on a vertical rocky face and falls down few hundreds meters towards the ground. They climbed some of these ice routes with their handmade old shitty equipment. In late 1990’s, famous American ice climber Crag Lubben came to Shuangqiao valley with some Chinese ice climbers from Beijing, He climbed the ice and introduced this ice climbing paradise to the western climbing community. In the past 20 years, more and more climbers visited the Shuangqiao valley and explored more ice falls.

Nowadays young climbers regard here as a ideal ice playground and many of them gain the ice climbing practice and experience for the first time on blue and white ice.

The average altitude in Shuangqiao valley is over 4000 meters. It is much higher than the ice where the Northern American climbers usually climb in their home ground. It took a few days for these strong climbers to acclimatize to the height. A few days later, the international team climbed a hard ice fall “the wings WI4+” in a cold snowy day. All members including young students finished the climbing. This resulted in a big success for the new members of CMC. “This was an amazing trip for us, we had a great time with the Chinese climbers in Shuangqiao valley and I am already trying plan a way to come back.” said by Steven Van stickle, Canadian climber, mountain guide.

As a part of the further exchanging program in 2016 winter, CMC will organize a climbing trip to
Canadian mountain range. The Chinese climbers will hopefully climb some of the huge ice with the local climbers as an international team.
Five color ice fall

Alexis M. Berg is on “Xuebergkou” W15 Photo Zhao Zhongjun

Daliu ice climbing
Photo Gallery—Yi Minority 彝族 in Guizhou, west China 2016

Wuri Wusa 烏里烏沙
The first ascent of Ta Ri 6330m

Joint expedition to Nyainqentanglha West
Kobe University and Chinese University of Geosciences, Wuhan: October 2015
Tim (Tatsuo) Inoue

Attempt to Bada Ri (Pata Kangri 6516m) and the first ascent of Ta Ri (6330m)

The joint expedition was organized to celebrate the 100 anniversary of the Alpine Club of Kobe University established in 1915. This is the third joint expedition held by the two universities. Que’er Shan 6168m (Sichuan) in 1986 and Lopchin Feng6805m (Kangri Garpo) in 2009 were successfully done as the first ascents.

The name of Bada Ri comes from Tibetan pronunciation “Pa” and” Ta” which means “pig or boar” and “tiger or snow leopard”. “Ri” means mountain, but snow and ice covered mountain is called “Kangri” by Tibetan. And “Pa Ta” had translated into Chinese pinyin “Bada”. It is better to name “Pata Kangri” to this mountain. When we came back to the base camp “Ta Ri” was named by the local people after they knew our first ascent of the peak.

Bada Ri is the last un-climbed over 6500m peak in the Nyainqentanglha West Mountains located in the middle of the range. The peak is hidden by many other peaks and stands in the deep north end of Bada Qu valley. No explorer and climber had been entered in the valley until we came in 2015.

On October 23, the base camp (BC: 5250m) was set up on the brown meadow near the confluence of two glacier valleys in the Bada Qu. 7 Japanese (2 students) led by chief leader Tim Inoue and climbing leader Takeru Yamada, 2 Tibetan climbers and 7 Chinese (5 students) led by co-leader Prof. Dong Fan were assembled. It took 3 days to carry stuff to BC by 14 yaks from the temporary base camp (TBC: 4800m) at the road end in the Bada Qu upper valley of Natsu Village.

On October 27, after 3 days route finding and carrying stuff to the camp 1 (5700m on the South-west Bada Glacier), 6 members tried summit push. At 4:18 AM, they started in the dark and went up on the left flank of the glacier to the south west ridge of Bada Ri. The steep slope of the route was covered by hard ice. 30m and 100m ropes were fixed on the wall.

At 9:02, they reached the snow covered shoulder peak on the south west ridge of Bada Ri. The GPS indicated 6330m.

From the shoulder peak, the sharp snow covered ridge goes down 10 to 20 meters to a col and again rises to the summit. 3 of attack members tried to climb the ridge, but they could not make the summit because of piled loose rocks on the summit ridge caused by resent dry climate of the mountains. Packed thin snow evaporated by the sun shine was breakable and made stacked rocks unstable. The icy steep slopes of the both side of the ridge were avalanche washed. They understood that climbing to the summit means suicide.

The weather was perfect during our expedition, blue sky every day, a few times small snow fall, but no pile up snow.
On October 29, we returned Lhasa. The Chinese Tibet Mountaineering Association (CTMA) invited us to a cerebration dinner party. The first ascent of Ta Ri was officially certified by CTMA.

After the earthquake of Nepal in April, All Himalaya Expedition was cancelled and there was only our expedition to Tibet in the autumn of 2015. CTMA said, it will be open in the next spring.

**Field research of peaks in the Nyainqentanglha West Mountains**

The Nyainqentanglha West Mountains runs from the north-east to the south-west with about 280km length. The Nam Tso (4729m), the highest elevation salty lake in the world, lies on the northern sides of the mountains. The mountain range is relatively popular in Tibet.

Two of 7000m peaks, Nyainqentanglha Shan (7162m) and Qungmo Kangri (7048m), were already climbed. However, over 200 peaks captured by Google earth and ASTER GDEM which are over 6000m peaks are located in the range and most of peaks are unclimbed. Golden Dragon (6614m) and Samdain Kang Sang (6590m) are well known and already climbed. There is only one unclimbed peak over 6500m, Bada Ri (6516m). According to our research, around 30 peaks were already climbed and many unclimbed peaks are sleeping in the range.

The author's parties has been studying peaks and have identified peaks from the “View Point as below. through our research tour in 2014 and 2015.

◆ View Point : The summit of Ta Ri 6330m

The 360 degree panorama picture taken on the top of Ta Ri (6330m), where ACKU 2015 expedition party climbed provides good profiles of many hidden peak in the middle area of Nyainqentanglha West Mountains. Five peaks of Bada Ri was unveiled. NW-100 (6360m), Boring (6384m) and Chagla (6428m) on the Ridge of Gurin Qu / Gilha Qu divide opened their faces to us.
NW-100 has 6428m elevation in Google earth. We thought it was suspicious because a few pictures taken from the View Point-1 and 2 shows that the peak looks much higher than the nearest two peaks, NW-101 and NW-102. The ASTER GDEM data provided us 6360m. The height of 6360m is likely close to the real elevation of it.

◆ View Point: Kyizi ridge

One better place is the View Point: Kyizi ridge that is on the ridge between NW-108 and NW-160 just west of Kyizi. Tibet Mountaineering School (TMS) has often held their training on Kyizi. Mr. Deqing Ouzhu who is our expedition member, a graduated school boy of TMS and a student of CUGW took pictures from the View Point-6 in October 2015. NW-100, NW-101 (6251m) and NW-102 (6144m) in the deep valley of Gilha Qu are captured. Both pictures from Ta Ri and the View Point-6 give us clear identification of the peaks.

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First ascents on virgin summits in the “Alps of Tibet”
Gangga Massif, Shaluli Shan Range, Sichuan
Team: Austria and Spain

The mountain ranges of East Tibet, part of Sichuan province, China, were described by the legendary Japanese explorer Tomatsu Nakamura as the “Alps of Tibet” and are considered as one the last frontiers of mountaineering. Inspired by his work an Austrian-Spanish expedition, organized by Gerald Boess, Judith Fall and Paul Niel, left for three weeks to explore and climb in Western Sichuan, precisely the eastern ranges of the Gangga massif.

There they discovered the main mountain to be a large snow and ice peak, named “Dechok Phodrang” by local monks, meaning “Palace of the highest bliss”. In cold and clear winter conditions, with temperatures reaching as low as -15 C°, the team, lead by Simon and Martin Elias, managed to open two new routes on the Northwest face and climb its two main summits:

On Nov. 4th 2015, following a night in high camp located in a large rock cave the rope teams braved a local earthquake to climb a great snow and ice route that traverses the whole face to reach the rocky north summit, being measured at 5550m (1).

Four days later, the climbers headed for the main summit. Despite overnight snow fall, they ploughed for almost twelve hours through knee and hip deep snow up a couloir, climbed a large serac fall and stood eventually on the 5632m peak (2).

Austrian filmmakers Lothar Hofer and Martin Sochor were part of the expedition - a documentary about the ascent and exploration is due to be published in first half 2016.

The team expresses gratitude to their supporters: Bergans of Norway and Manner; Tomatsu Nakamura; Jiyue Zhang and Alex Tang from Earth Expeditions and all the friendly and welcoming people of East Tibet.

(1) "Austrian-Spanish Classic" D+ (800m)
North Summit, Dechok phodrang (5550m)
GPS: 31.45241N/ 99.99883E
Start of the route at high camp 4740m

(2) “Dechok Direct” D+ (1000m)
Central Summit, Dechok phodrang (5632m)
GPS: 31.449167N/ 99.997778E
FA: 8.11.2015: G. Boess, M. Elias, S. Elias, J. Fall, L. Hofer, P. Niel
Start of the route at bottom of the mountain: 4610m

Expedition Members: Gerald Boess, Martin Elias, Simon Elias, Judith Fall, Lothar Hofer, Paul Niel, Martin Sochor
Gangga Massif – Dechok phodran SW face (Photo: Paul Niel)

Eastern rim of Gangga Massif – Pk 5690m (left) & Dechok phodrang 5662m (right) E face (T. Shiro)
Eagle Peak East – Mt. Siguniang Massif, Qionglai Mountain

Dave Anderson

I first saw Eagle Peak East (5,300m) in the fall of 2013 after completing the first ascent of Dayantianwo in the Shuangqiao Valley, China (Three Sheep Bring Prosperity, 600m 5.10

While enjoying the spectacular view from the summit, my wife Szu-ting Yi and I noticed a large shark’s tooth spire just to the North. We later learned the mountain was part of the Eagle Rock group, a prominent trio of rock towers that rise above Bai Haizi Lake. Eagle Peak East had only one published ascent by a Japanese team in 2007 which followed the lower angled southwest face. The Japanese climbers also referred to the peak as Wagrusei.

On September 12, 2015, we returned to the Shuangqiao Valley and established a base camp at the foot of Eagle Peak East. The weather was unsettled. We experienced precipitation in the form of rain and snow almost every day of the expedition. We initially attempted a route up the south face following a central chimney and crack system. The line turned out to be the main drainage for the upper section of the peak which made for challenging wet climbing. In addition, we found numerous bolts and pitons on the first two pitches from an unknown previous attempt. Not wanting to follow someone else’s route in a water spout, we rappelled and looked for other ascent options. We eventually settled on a route up the south-east face, fixed four ropes and then waited for a break in the weather. On Sept 23 wejugged our fix ropes to our high point and continued up past sparsely protected steep slabs. At a large ledge system we traversed to the east ridge and followed featured granite to the top. We rappelled our route arriving back at our basecamp after 18 hours of effort. No bolts or pins were placed during the ascent or descent. We called the route Secret Moon Cake (5.10R, 760m) after the delicious pastry cakes that people in China enjoy during the Mid Autumn festival.
Climbing route on Eagle Peak East
On 2015.10.16 we arrived in Chengdu. Next day we took a bus to Moxi, a mountain resort and gate to the Hailuogou National Park. On 2015.10.19 we took the national park bus and cable car to reach the lower (ca 3400m) part of the glacier flowing from the feet of Minya Konka. We hired several porters for that day but they failed to take our loads to the altitude we had been hoping to achieve. That meant we had to spend the next 2 days on ferrying loads to the base camp at 4150m.

Over another few days we transported tents, gear and food to the rim (ca 4400m) of the glacier flowing from the feet of San Lian. Then we managed to navigate that glacier to find a relatively safe way to the base of the East Face (ca 5260m) where we wanted to start our climb.

After another round of transport we went down to rest in our base camp for two days (2015.11.2-3). On 2015.11.05 we were back at the base. On 2015.11.06 Wojtek led the first rock pitch (ca M7) and fixed a rope for the next day. On 2015.10.07 we jugged the pitch and started climbing. Initially it was mainly thin, aerated and sun bleached ice, we’d rate it WI5 R on several sections. After dusk we veered left and had to abseil one pitch to find a place to bivy. It took quite of bit of time and effort to hack a platform big enough for our tent.

2015.10.08 In the morning we got back onto our line and after a number of ice and mixed pitches and a bit of traversing we managed to establish ourselves in a steep snowy gully. There we found a ledge decent for a sitting bivy for three and we eagerly took that opportunity.

2015.10.09. On the third day of climbing we followed the steepening gully to an even steeper rocky arête capped with loose snow. It gave us a hard time really as it offered steps of drytool bouldering with backpack shouldering at 6000m altitude. Snow protection proved very much limited to psychological support while the rock was shattered and crumble. In one place we decided to circumnavigate the edge of the arête below it (around M5) but it took long enough to make us bivy one more time. Around 11p.m. Wojtek accidently sent his sleeping bag down to the base of the climb but luckily the temps were tolerable and there was no wind.

2015.10.09. We climbed an M6 pitch back up to the arête. Then after a few more exposed pitches we stood on the corniced summit ridge. The views were stunning but we quickly traversed over the South East summit (6200+ m) to the col (6180m) separating it from the Central summit (6488m). From there we abseiled down the north face, mainly on ice threads. Around 1 a.m. we reached a large snow field (a tier of the glacier between the East and the Central summit) and started walking down. When it got steeper again we got into a crevassed area and Rafał, who was going first, fell into one. Luckily the rope caught him after 15m free fall. As soon as the partners built solid snow anchors...
Rafal jugged up to safety. After that we decided to bivy one more time in our tent.

2015.11.11. On the fifth day we found a way down the glacial maze and took some abseils between the rock pillars and seracs. Thus we reached a relatively safe part of the glacier to come back to the base of the climb (ca 5260m) in the evening.

Then over the next 2 days we returned to our base camp at 4150m. 2015.11.14 we went back to Moxi with our porters’ help and on 2015.11.18 we were back home in Poland. We are quite satisfied with the outcome as we managed to climb a beautiful route on a virgin summit. We’d rate it around ED2, M7, WI5, R and ca. 1600m of length. We called it Hard Camping.

Our special thanks goes to Piotr Xięski and Janusz Majer for their selfless support and public-spirited work for the benefit of the Polish mountaineering development. Marcin Rutkowski Wojtek Ryczer Rafał Zając

Lindsay Griffin’s note for the AAJ

Climbing activity in this decade on the peaks constituting the watershed ridge running south from Minya Konka has given rise to some confusion over their nomenclature. From 1929-1931 the range was visited by the Swiss geologist Arnold Heim, who at the time was a professor at the Sun Yat-Sen University in China. In 1930 he was accompanied by Eduard Imhof, a Swiss cartographer, who surveyed the area, made a map, measured the height of Minya Konka, and confirmed the existence of its three principal glaciers.

The most prominent feature visible from the gateway Hailuogou Glacier is the last high peak at the southern end of the ridge, Peak 6,410m. Heim and Imhof chose to give this mountain the name Mt. Tai (Tai Shan), after Tai Chi–Chao, one of the university team who accompanied the expedition and, from an organizational perspective, made it possible. This peak has appeared on recent sketch maps with the Chinese name Jinyin Shan (Gold-Silver Mountain). The other prominent feature when viewed from the lower Hailuogou is a three-peaked mountain, Peak 6,368m, which Heim and Imhof designated Mt. Chu, after Chu Chia-Hua, another university member who accompanied the expedition. This mountain has also become known as Sanlian Feng (Three Lotus Flowers Peaks), presumably (like the name Jinyin) as a consequence of the major development of the Hailuogou Glacier for domestic tourism. Additional confusion has been caused by the attribution of the name Mt. Chu to surveyed points further north on the watershed ridge, including Peaks 6,468m and even 6,684m, although these are respectively difficult and impossible to see from the Hailuogou Valley.

The 1981 Swiss expedition which made the first ascent of Tai Shan followed the convention of Heim and Imhof, and, if one maintains this nomenclature, then the summits on the main ridge, from south to north, should be referred to as Tai Shan (6,410m), Chu Shan (Sanlian Southeast, Sanlian Central, Sanlian Main (6,368m)), Peak 6,468m, Peak 6,460m (western top of Peak 6,468m), Long Shan (Dragon Mountain, 6,684m), and Minya Konka (7,556m). Point 6,858m, close to Minya Konka and sometimes misidentified as Longshan, has no prominence and cannot be considered a separate top.
San Lian Peaks: Left end is South East Peak 6200+m east face climbed by Polish team
Climbing route

On the summit ridge
First ascent of Nyambo Konka 6114m of Minya Konka Range

On 28th October 2015 – Korean Expedition

Jeju Nyambo Konka first ascent expedition · members: Total 9 members led by Sung-kyu, Gang · climbing route: SE Face~NW Ridge · Summit date: 18:00PM 28th October 2015 (local time)

Summit members: Young-yong Kim (climbing leader), Jong-jin Kang, Dong-jin Kim

Climbed Route Map
Nyambo Konka
Base camp

Nyangbo Konka 6114m (left) east face (Photo: Polish party)
A few years ago I came across an inspiring photo taken from Polish Pass that is lying between K6 and Changi Tower in Karakorum. The picture presented magnificent sharp peaks surrounding Lachit Valley located south from K6. This massive range of mountains is named Tagas and it was completely unexplored by climbers. This year I was lucky and finally received a permission to enter Lachit Valley and explore Tagas Mountains.

I decided to organize a small group of three proven friends with whom I climbed the biggest north faces in the Alpes and plenty of winter routes in our Tatra Mountains. Our team consisted of me, Maciej Bedrejczuk, Marcin Wernik and Maciej Janczar with plenty experiences on the north faces of Eiger, Grandes Jorasses and Matterhorn.

On 18 August our team of four departed from Warsaw to Islamabad and then moved to Skardu via famous Karakorum Highway. From Skardu we travelled with two 4x4s to the Lachit Village where we slept in tents. Next morning we started trekking to the basecamp. Lachit Valley has several arms.
on the east side and we needed to choose the one with best faces to climb, close water and flat area for our tents. We finally managed to find a decent but not very flat place under the moraine at about 4000m above sea with two splendid 6000m peaks.
After getting acclimatized we set for some a real adventure. Our first aim was the peak soaring on the left side from the basecamp. We set off at about midday and before nightfall we set up an advance basecamp (ABC) under the serac at 5000m which was securing us from stonewalls and avalanches. That night was spent in bivi sacs as the weather was supposed to stay good. However during the night it started to snow and by morning we were all covered with a thick white duvet. It was still snowing heavily and first avalanches were getting loose on the slopes. The decision was instant and half an hour later we were going down surprised that some crevasses were already covered.

After the weather cleared on 4th September we pushed again for the same goal. This time we took two light tents and made them under the same serac at 5000m. Next morning we overslept and started to climb at about 7am. We planned our route on the north face of the mountain as we believed it to be in good condition. From the glacier we climbed simultaneously for about 300m traversing leftward iced slopes. From the end of traverse we climbed up easy iced slopes up to the rocks with some fun ice gullies. The night caught us on the small ridge. We felt quite tired and decided to spend the rest of night on a tiny ledge at 5600m. The summit ridge seemed not too far. Leaving the basecamp we had had a good forecast for the next couple of days. At about 2 am it suddenly started to snow and kept on through the dawn. We made a difficult decision to continue up despite weather breakdown. The first pitch after bivi was leading through a tricky thin ice and offered a long runout on unprotected 15mm thick verglas that was falling off if I hit to strong. After another two pitches we
found ourselves on the summit ridge. There was another obstacle - a 30m step that needed to be climbed down and up. In the fog we finally reached the highest point of the mountain at 5809m. It was about 3 p.m. We returned through the step to the verge of the north face at about 17.00 and started to abseil. Due to constant snowfall the whole face was covered with one continuous spindrift. At about 2.30 am we reached our tents under the serac. Next day after a long rest we came down to the basecamp in a continuing weather breakdown. The route was called “Rolling D(Ice)” and the mountain was named by our sponsors as the Dream Walker Peak.
Following two days of recovery in BC we packed our backpacks and set off to explore another arm of Lachit Valley. As a reward the neighboring arm of Lachit Valley turned out very beautiful with spectacular views over virgin 6000m summits. There also were many flat grassy spots for basecamp with water. Only the faces were a bit further than from our BC. The next day we moved to 5000m and spent second night on the glacier, surrounded by beautiful unclimbed summits. Our initial plan was to make some easy ascents on those peaks and explore as much as possible. From the bivi we could clearly see the perfectly vertical north face of the highest peak in Tagas massive. It was a soaring tower difficult from all sides with airy ridges and pointing summit – the great dream of every alpinist. Because of its character we gave it a working name – the Ogre. Looking at it from our tents made us lose any doubts that climbing this summit would be the main goal of our expedition and the essence of alpinism which we knew. The Ogre had a promising ice couloir on the north-east face and it was also easily accessible from our BC. We quickly counted days that were left and realized that the only chance to climb the Ogre was to return to BC now and give up all other peaks. So we packed our tents and reached BC in the evening.

Within the next few days we established ABC under the foot of 1,5km high north-east face of Ogre. The steep couloir collected everything that was falling off the face. It was however well hidden from sunrays

On 18\textsuperscript{th} September after lunch we went to ABC. Next morning we hit the face taking bivisacs and food for four nights. Looking from the bottom our route seemed quite steep and we did not expect to find spots for tents. We climbed again in a team of four which takes more time but enables the load of equipment to be shared more evenly. On the other hand our couloir was the most obvious route in the valley. The first pitch led us through a small serac at the start and then we climbed simultaneously until the first steep ice. The next pitches offered enjoyable ice climbing. That day was a 15m long section of almost vertical ice with 30cm of snow plastered on. At about 11pm we dug a comfortable platform in a snow.

On the next day at about 9 am we continued climbing reaching a rock band with some fun M5 terrain. Late after the dark we found a small spot (small for four people) and spent a second night there. The next day we climbed together through easy gullies until the ice steepened in a chimney that was leading to the summit ridge. When I was following him I realized the chimney was overhanging and the ice became frozen sand. We were just below 6000m and it was difficult to catch a breath making M7\textsuperscript{+} with a backpack. The next pitch was short but also not too easy, offering some M6 moves in an overhanging chimney. The final pitch led us through a small snow cornice and there we were on the
saddle at 6004m after climbing the north-east face. Obviously we planned to keep going onto the summit. It was about 3.30pm and the weather went bad. We could not see the ridge laying ahead and decided to check the forecast with the basecamp. Because of bad weather forecast, we needed one full day to get to the summit and return to the saddle. We started to abseil and late at night we reached our first bivi. On the next day in a still good weather we continued abseiling. Only one stance on entire route was protected with a rock. After 27 abseils from ice threads and pitons we touched the glacier and came down to ABC. At about 17.30 we returned to basecamp. On the same night it started to snow heavily and continued for the next couple of days. The route was called “Polish Couloir” and ended at the saddle. The summit of Ogre is still unclimbed.

Our expedition to TheTagas Mountains was an excellent and inspiring experience. There are many beautiful virgin peaks to climb within a relatively short distance from the village.

**Surroundings of the Lachit Valley (Tagas Group, K6 Group)**

Jerzy Wala, translated by Monika Hartman

In October 1992, late Adam Zachwieja, a chemist, sport pilot and traveller, took a photo of the panorama of peaks from the plateau over the settlement of Khapalu (Khaplu). The panorama I saw aroused my interest because of its outstanding mountain landscape – as well as of its absence in the
mountaineering literature. The interest was increased by E. Koblmuller’s photos taken from K6 (7281 m) and by Wojciech Kurtyka’s ones from the trekking to the Nangmah Valley in the summer of 2000. I was intrigued and thus the idea of elaborating the topography of this area under the name of the “Tagas Group” was conceived, with the name derived from the village located at the opening of the central valley, the point of the confluence between the valley stream and the Saltoro River.

In 2004, a publication entitled “Tagas Group. Topography of the Mountain Group”. Edition 1, Kraków 2004 was released, containing the entire information on this area available at the time. The later Polish Expeditions – of K. Bełczyński and M. Tomaszewski in 2003, of Jan Kuczera and Tomasz Polok to the Nanmah Valley in 2005, of Łukasz Depta, Andrzej Głuszek and Piotr Sztaba to Changi Tower in 2010, and, especially, the Bulgarian expeditions of 2011 and 2012 to the Khane Valley allowed us to expand the topographic publication. Supplements were issued, therefore: “Tagas Group. The Khane Valley and its Surroundings”. Supplement 1 · in 2012, and the subsequent “Tagas Group. The Khane Valley and its Surroundings” Supplement 2 · in 2014. They were made in cooperation with Janusz Majer. The Lachit Lungma Valley and its surroundings were almost entirely unknown in mountaineering literature and remained unexplored. It was only in 2015 that the mountaineers from the Warsaw Mountaineering Club, whom I had inspired with the interest in the area, managed to obtain the permission of the Pakistani authorities to enter the Lachit Valley and climb there. The abundance of the topographic material brought by Marcin Wernik, a participant of the expedition, motivated me, together with Janusz Majer, to elaborate the third supplement to the publication, containing quite a considerable section of the Tagas Group. Only the following valleys and their surroundings have not yet been fully explored: Tagas Lungma, Tsino Valley and Second Lachit Valley.

Despite the fact that altitudes are not great there · only a few peaks exceed the height of 6000 m · the high mountain landscape and mountaineering values of the Tagas Group are in no way inferior to the most interesting sections of Karakoram. In 2015, apart from the Polish expedition, an Italian one operated in the Lachit Lungma Valley, contributing to the further documentation of the surroundings of the valley.

In the proximity of the road to Hushe, along the paved road leading from Skardu to Kamarding and, from there, along the Kaberi River Valley, towards the Kaberi Glacier and Kondus Glacier, access to the described Tagas Group and the Lachit Lungma Valley is presently significantly easier.

Unfortunately, the names of locations in the region of the Lachit Lungma Valley have not been identified. Therefore, the map depicting the Polish activity in the valley is marked with provisional terms allowing for the description of the area. The names of peaks and passes come from the expedition participants or were coined by the author of Map 2.

The area of the Tagas Group is presented in greater detail only on the available G.S.USSR 1:100 000...
and 1:200 000 maps. The mountains can also be viewed in the Google Earth programme. It has to be explained that the terrain relief in these images is highly generalised due to the use of the automatic image analysis for terrain modelling. The terrain model, on which the satellite images are superimposed, is based on a grid of squares used in automatic processing. In the high mountain terrain presented, minor sheer fragments are not properly captured, together with their heights.

Marcin Wernik’s photographs indicate that the Tagas Group area is made up mainly of metamorphic rock, including gneiss and crystalline shale, characterised by perpendicular rock formations generated by erosion. There may also be granite and other volcanic rocks there. The Lachit Lungma Valley area is used by the natives as a pasture for yaks. In the neighbourhood of a shepherd farmhouse, the Polish Base Camp was established for the expedition. The name is marked on Map 2. It was accepted by the expedition liaison officer, so it may perpetuate in further mountaineering exploration of the valley. Hopefully, the English names translatable to the local languages, given to previously nameless objects, will largely be accepted.

The geographic grid from the map for G.S.USSR 1:200 000 was used for the elaborated orographic maps. The map of the Tagas Group of 2004 was based on "Northern Areas of Pakistan. Satellite Image Map in the scale 1:500 000. All objects such as peaks and alps were marked with arabic numerals, which, added to photographs, allow for their swift identification, both on the orographic map and in the terrain description.

In 2004, I prepared a topographic description of a part of Karakoram in a separate notebook, which I entitled "K6 Group". I included an orographical map of this mountain subgroup belonging to the Masherbrum Mountain Group. In the late 2015, I and Janusz Majer received photographs from the Polish expedition to the Lachit Lungma Valley. We decided then to elaborate Supplement 2 to the publication "K6 Group". It includes the south-eastern part of the K6 mountain subgroup from the Polish Col pass (5901 according to the GPS) up to the Kondus River. The pass was given its name in Supplement 1, elaborated following the expedition organised by the Kraków Mountaineering Club in 2010, which attempted an ascent of Changi Tower (6475 m, 32) along the north-western ridge. This is an area never mentioned as visited by mountaineers in literature. In the centre of K6 Group there is a massif officially known as Baltistan Peak. Its greatest elevation was marked with the symbol K6 (7281 m). A south-eastern ridge branches out from it, towards the Polish Col pass. Behind the pass there is an eminent alp, the height of which was determined by an Austrian expedition to be 6500 m and named Changi Tower. In 2015, Americans ascended it along its north-western ridge and measured its height by means of an aneroid, obtaining the result of 6475 m. A quite unremarkable alp in Google Earth images, Changi Tower is in reality the highest monolithic elevation in the area bearing that name. It may become the goal of many expeditions.
exploring new variants of climbing routes. On the western and northern side there are high rock walls with a slight addition of mixed snow and rock terrain, however, on the eastern side the snow of the cirque called Changi Cwm reaches quite high and the wall itself is covered with snow to a greater extent. Access to the eastern wall of Changi Tower requires a longer walk along the East Lachit Glacier, starting from the settlement of Lachit at the opening of the Lachit Lungma Valley. So far, nobody has achieved this.

A side ridge branches out of Changi Tower towards south, separating the Lachit Glacier from the East Lachit Glacier. The glaciers received their names in the publication "K6 Group" of 2004. The ridge and its side branches are thick with soaring steeples most probably composed of metamorphic rock. The cirques between the side ridges are filled with glacier tongues merging with the tongue of the East Lachit Glacier on the south-eastern side and with the Lachit Glacier on the western side. A long ridge with many peaks and side branches extends from Changi Tower (6475 m, 32), at first towards the east and then towards the south. Between them there are cirques filled by cirque glaciers and cirque-valley ones. Lachit Lungma and Kaberi Lungma valleys cut deep into the mountain plinth of the Central Karakoram. This is visible in the photographs and Google Earth images. The basins draining water from glaciers located high are steep and narrow.

The name of the river flowing out of the large Kaberi Glacier and Kondus Glacier is problematic. On the map of the W.H.Workman and Bullock Workman expeditions of 1911 and 1912 it is named "Kaberi", while the glacier from which it flows is called the "Kaberi Glacier". On the east it merges with a glacier called "Kaberi or Kondus". On later maps, naming the stream as "Kondus River" was perpetuated. However, satellite images clearly demonstrate that the name of the stream in the Workmans’ map was correct. Kaberi Glacier fills the valley, blocking the end of the tongue of the glacier now called Kondus Glacier. This is evident in the LANDSAT image. Thus, the name of the stream should stem from the name of the glacier from which it really flows.

From the north-east, the main ridge surrounds the upper level of the glacier called the "East Lachit Glacier" in the previous publications, as well as in the satellite image published in AAJ. 2005 (see p. 32). The glacier fills four cirques separated by side ridges. The highest peak in the area is marked as 55 (6381 m). There is one more peak of 6161 m in the vicinity, marked as 71. Towards south, a twisted ridge descends well below 6000 m. However, even in this ridge there is a very prominent peak, marked as 90. It most probably reaches the height of almost 6000 m. It is visible in the photos taken by M. Wernik, a participant of the Polish expedition to the Lachit Valley in 2015. Reaching it from the south-west from the Lachit Lungma Valley is hard, the route leading along a steep narrow ravine with rocky brink. Approach may be more convenient from the east, but, so far, the area is inaccessible for mountaineering expeditions. The peak is named Karmading Brakk from the name of Karmading settlement (see map 1). The whole area is thick with alps and steeples.
Ascent of Api 7132m in West Nepal 2015
Japanese Expedition – September to October, 2015

Kenro Nakajima

Members: Kazuya Hiraide, Kenro Nakajima, Takuya Mitoro

Expedition period: 35 days from September 27 to October 31

Climbing history of Api 7132m

The Api-Nampa massif is located about 300km northwest of Pokara in the extreme northwestern rim of Nepal and is now protected as a nature conservation area. The region was visited by Westerners in 1899, 1905, and 1936, but the peak was not attempted until 1953 on a visit by W. H. Murray a Scottish Mountaineer with John Tyson. This attempt was unsuccessful, as was another, by Italians, in 1954 which resulted in the death of two expedition members. The first ascent of Api was made by The Doshisha University Alpine Club of Japan in 1960 having completed the Northwest Face route attempted by the 1954 party. Katsutoshi Hirabayashi and a Sherpa stood atop. In 1980 a British Army Mountaineering Association expedition made an attempt to climb the peak by the south face reaching within a few hundred meters of the summit. December 24, 1983 Polish climbers Tadeusz Piotrowski and Andrzej Bieluń made the first winter ascent. The Himalayan Index lists three more ascents of the peak, in 1978, 1996 and 2001.

Japanese Expedition 2015

We came to Api-Nampa massif with an objective of the first ascent of the southwest face of Api and a traverse from the west peak to the main summit. On April 25 fierce earthquake happened and aftershocks continued in Nepal. Nevertheless western part of Nepal did not suffered from large damages. Our travel agency asked us to visit Nepal for climbing as it would contribute to support Nepalese people.

We left Kathmandu by a bus on September 30 and on October 5 arrived at DhauloOdor (bus, jeep, and caravan-porters/donkeys) and set up south BC (south side). Nakajima suffered from altitude sickness on the way. We could reach a place for south BC more easily than anticipated. To our surprise, however, naked southwest face looked “black” with almost no snow and ice clad. The conditions were different from the picture that we had brought from Japan. When a Giri-giri Boy’s party attempted in spring of 2012, they were much annoyed by bad weather and unstable snow conditions. This information led us to make a challenge in a season of good weather and much snow. But it was doubtful whether our decision is a right approach. We ascended the east ridge for
acclimatization and reconnaissance of descent route after climbing the southwest face. Sunshine was strong and stone falling was incessant. The east ridge was difficult to climb as often appearing in the Himalaya and must be not easy to descend.

October 8, cloudy after fine, south BC (08:00) – Camel’s hump – 5200m (14:30)
October 9, fine and cloudy, 5200m (06:15) – couloir (06:30) – col (08:15) – 5550m (10:30)
October 10, cloudy after fine, 5550m (05:50) – col (07:15) – 5250m (08:30) – BC (12:15)

We returned to south BC after three days reconnaissance without positive prospect for the southwest face. The lower half of the southwest face was uncertainly exposed to stone falls. Climbing is too dangerous. We were discouraged. However we were unable to return home with no crops. Hiraide proposed an idea that we should turn northward as the first ascent was made from the northern side. There remained no other choice. We decided to ascend Api from to northern side carrying 10 days gears and supplies from south BC. We crossed a col between Api and Nampa to the northern side. Although we investigated several routes from the northern side, we finally took the same route as the first ascent.

October 16, fine-cloudy-foggy-snow, south BC (08:40 – Upper hump (13:00) – 5200m (15:30)
October 17, fine, 5200m (05:30) – col (07:30) – glacier terminus (11:00) – Kharka (14:40)
October 18, Cloudy-fine, Kharka (06:50) – Reconnoitering glacier (10:15–14:20) – Chhuagaru (14:50)
October 19, fine, Chhuagaru (06:30) – north BC (13*30)
October 20, fine, north BC (06:30) – Upper moraine (08:45) – Upper plateau (11:05) – Attack camp (14:30)
October 21, fine, Attack camp (06:30) – Top of Api 7132m (10:30) – Attack camp (14:30) – north BC (16:00)

October 28, returned to Kathmandu

North face of Api 7132m (Doshisha University Alpine Club)
Api southwest face

Api north face

Descending ice fall

On the summit of Api

View from top of Api to north (left—mountains in India, right—Namunani, far right—Kailash)

View from top of Api to south (left—Nampa, Bohaie, far left—Saipal)
In autumn 2015, a JAC Student Section party consisted of 6 members made 2 first ascents in north-east area of Kangchenjunga: Dzanye II 6318m and Lhonak Peak 6070m, both included among those peaks newly lifted by Nepali authority in spring 2014.

The area surrounding Dzanye I 6710m, the peak first climbed in 1949 by Swiss party, remained almost untrod since then. The party identified Dzanye II through Google earth satellite photos and their own GPS measurement, along with the base location announced by Nepali bureau.

The party leader, Takanori Mashimo (21 years old), who had once visited this area in 2013, put forward this first-fruits-seeking expedition, after hard cheer-up of the Section's young colleagues mostly desperately submissive and illiterate.

Squeezed among 20 candidates off those lack of initiative spirits, the following five eventually remained as final participants: Kotaro Miyatsu (24), Kenta Kimura (21), Shin-nosuke Ashikari (22), Shun Katsurai (20), and Takehiro Nozawa (20).

The expedition took place following dairy:

September 9, 2015 March’in started at Taplejung, after 2days bus trip left Kathmandu
September 17, Arrived at Lhonak
October 4, Reached the top of Dzanye II, after 3 camps established in-between, while another 1 camp for Lhonak Peak ascent.
October 15, Returned at Kathmandu

As for their climbing routes, attached route map shows in detail.
They did not use sherpa and porters at all during the climbing scene as their principle: “Do everything by yourselves”. All consisted of the twenties aged members, this explorative-minded party is fully educative on purpose as well, being so boastfully reported on top pages of recent JAC monthly publication.

In old days in JAC, it was rather common that everybody so fervently desired to aim at the blank of the maps, which spirits made JAC a majestic national-based club. Nowadays the club seems to be more concerned with social events/undertakings, or regard famous mountains chasing only worthwhile.

Phases of the times have changed, and even a mere coverage of overlooked map blanks really means valuable before speaking of superb technique etc. (Text: Kei Kurachi)
Unfrequented Arunachal Pradesh
The Upper Siang 2015/2016 – Northeast Frontier, India

Reiko Terasawa
A friend of mine in India, who visited more than 50 times Arunachal Pradesh during 14 years, tempted me to travel through the same region in September 2015 and February 2016. The journey in late September of 2015 was from Simong heading to Ekodumbing (Riu Tala at about 4,000m) located in the border of Yingkiong where Tibetan Buddhists, Christians and Hindu villagers live together. However incessant heavy rain hindered our progress to go farther beyond a point of just one day march to the destination.

This area used to be owned by the Simong community. Vegetation varies from a tropical plant to that of the Frigid Zone, sometimes new species are discovered. Rare animals such as takin and Mithun inhabit. Nature worship and Shamanism are prevalent. Adi tribe of Simong is a land of Adi tribe’s animal and plant hunting. A myth of goddess of Tibetan Buddhists, Dorje Pagmo tells that “head is Kangri Garpo, both breasts are Namcha Barwa and Gyala Peri and lower body is Pemako called Yang Sang or Upper Siang.” Difference in culture causes a fight and conflict.

On February 15, we flew from Delhi to Digugarh, where we crossed Brahmaputra to Pasighat by a regular service boat. In 2015 the river had been crossed in 30 minutes, while in 2016 it took two hours because lower water level. We arrived at Donyi Polo Tea Estate of Oyang in the dark. A spring fiesta for praying good harvest, Ali Aye Ligan coincidently began, it continued for five days and we joined the fiesta for three days, visited home to home drank Apon (local wine) and ate rice-cake with smoked poke for celebrating the fiesta. A couple of days were lost.
Bridge under construction over Brahmaputra between Dibrugarh and Pasighat

Ekodumbing headed in 2015
From February 19 we proceeded in a hurry to catch up the delay. In the first day we drove from Pasighat to Komsing along the right bank of River Siang, a road NH229 under large expansion work which leads to Tawang. From there we crossed Boleng–Pangkang by a jeep road and then arrived at Deki Tea Estate of Mowing in the dark. This Estate invited a Japanese specialist for study and research of tea. Yingkiong was viewed in the opposite side of the river.

On February 20, we crossed a suspension bridge to visit Yingkiong, headquarter in this district. It was a memorial day of the 30th anniversary of Arunachal Pradesh. Adi tribe put up a flag of tribe <Donyi Pole> similar to Japanese national flag, Hinomaru. In the afternoon we hurried in rain and fog to Pussing–Bomdo and we stayed at a villager’s house in Janbo on the ridge. Many Adi gathered to just have a look of Japanese. My friend showed pictures taken in 1956–1959 when Mr. Nalni D Jayal was assigned to this place. Villagers could explain persons and places on the picture. These hinted few changes in Adi’s life-style for 60 years. Although it was raining February 21 was the last day in our schedule for reaching Gelling. We intently drove a bad mountain road. As approaching to Tuting, Tibetan Buddhism color became dominant. A large shining golden monastery was
constructed. Many of Adi have been turned from the town and villages and live in jungles. At the time of China-India war in 1962, all the villages were burned. We were touched that a half naked old Adi had remembered Mr. Jayal'sss having come to this place. We found the place where he had lived, but no building in those days remained. Instead there was a stylish public house. Meanwhile Abi's houses were commonly made of bamboo and banana leaves even nowadays.

In Tuting there was a army camp which was largest in Upper Siang. New airport was under construction. We headed to Gelling though we were annoyed by convoys of the army. A vehicle road had been connected only up to Tuting until four years ago. However, Modhi administration extended the road to Gulling for strengthen army being prepared for invasion of China. We arrived at Gulling in rain and thunder. From the road terminus, we must walk to the village, but in view of danger of land-slides in return we gave up going farther and stayed a Tibetan house at Kopu. On February 22, also it was raining but not heavily. We headed to Moying for return by the same way avoiding a risk of widely taking place land-slides of NH513 on the left bank of River Siang.

Permit issue: On-line application to the state government is possible submitting application form with a portrait photo, passport and copy of visa mentioning places of travel. In our case this time, however, we used a local agent. Permit is issued in 5 – 7 days after sending application. Application fee is US$50 + agent fee. (Information is as on January 25, 2016)

It is noted that irrespective of strong objection by the State Government, Arunachal Pradesh State has became a state under direct control and administration of the President on January 26, 2016. We must watch how this new policy is implemented and would affect and influence the tourism in the remote frontier such as the Upper Siang.
On August 4th our team composed by Natalia Martinez and Camilo Rada, as part of our Uncharted Project (previously climbing Cordillera de Sarmiento in 2012, Mount Sarmiento in 2013 and Aguilera Volcano in 2014, the last two pre-nominated to the Piolet d'Or award) flew into the Seward Glacier in Kluane National Park, close to Mount Saint Elias. After traversing 12 km we established a base camp near the base of Mount Malaspina, distinguished with the awkward title of "highest named unclimbed mountain of North America", and with no doubt one of the most prominent and attractive unclimbed summits of the continent. (Perhaps the highest unclimbed, depending on one’s definition of mountain adopted.) As far as we know it was seriously attempted only once, in 1976 by a Polish-Alaskan expedition through the west ridge (AAJ 1978, pp. 542).

After 3 days exploring the heavily crevassed glacier flowing from Malaspina to Seward, we finally discarded every option through the glacier. We were forced to hug an edge of the glacier exposed to...
avalanches, but where avalanche debris filled the crevasses. Crossing that section in the early morning, we established a high camp near the north face of the mountain, on August 9th.

We experienced bad weather and avalanche risk at the high camp, forcing us to abandon and never reoccupy the camp. Several areas of the high glacier basin near the wall seemed safe, yet seracs falling 1,000 m straight from the top of the north face were capable of launching ice and snow projectiles over the area of our camp. We decided to abandon the camp after being hit by strong winds and heavy spray a serac avalanche. We found a few TV-sized pieces of ice around camp with short tracks, suggesting that one of them landed just 4 meters away of our tent.

Once the weather improved, the summit push started from base camp on August 13th at 00:40 h. After 3 hours we reached the high camp deposit and continued towards the col between Mount Baird and Malaspina. The access to the col was extremely exposed to avalanches, rock and serac falls, therefore was done quickly at the hours before dawn. At 7 am we started the climb towards the col, running diagonally under a hanging glacier. We climbed the first 300 meters of snow and ice (45 to 60 degrees) in simultaneous. A small serac fall occurred nearby. Next we reached the easy col slopes with 2 pitches of 55-65° of ice. After resting we resumed climbing a ramp of 350 meters leading to Malaspina's East shoulder, consisting of a very sustained slope involving 9 pitches on 50-65 degrees on snow and ice with a final cornice with short vertical steps.

We reached the shoulder (3,377 m) shortly after midnight and built a igloo-like bivouac shelter surrounded by the breathtaking spectacle of a northern lights storm. The next day (15th) at 10 am we continued towards the summit covering easy snow slopes and few technical steps to overcome few bergshrunds. After a false summit, we finally summit at 2 pm with the GPS reading 3,756 meters. The view was dominated by the overwhelmingly large Malaspina Glacier, in fact the largest "Pie de mont" glacier in the world and an extremely outstanding feature in the area. This was accompanied by views to Mount Saint Elias to the West, The Logan massif to the North and Vancouver, Augusta, Cook and Fairweather to the East. The descent followed the same line and involved 15 rappels, half of them between low clouds, winds and heavy spindrift. We reached base camp again at 8 am on August 16th after 55 hours on the mountain.

**Summary:**

On August 15th 2015 Natalia Martinez and Camilo Rada made the first ascent of Mount Malaspina (3,776 meters) from the North via East col and East ridge (1900 m, TD*, AI2, 55-65°).
Kashkawuish Glacier dominating in the entrance of Kiuena National Park

Base Camp

North face of Malaspina

Mount Logan
This book widely covers the last frontier yet explored. Author has compiled 24 years discoveries and research in a gigantic volume well documented, perfectly illustrated by 53 maps with 540 pictures of fascinating least-known mountains. It will be an essential reference work for many generations. (published in January, 2016)