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Nangchen, Yushu Prefecture, Qinghai Province

Contents

"Peaks and Monasteries" in Nangchen and Yushu, Qinghai Province

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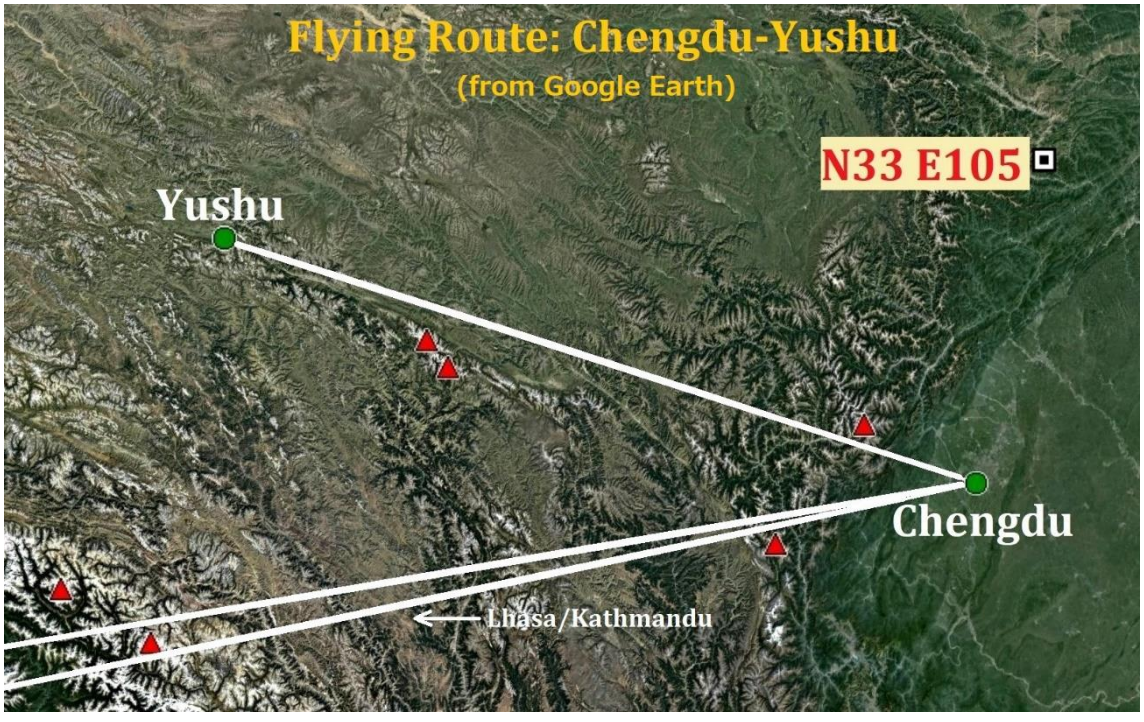
TAMOTSU (TOM) NAKAMURA

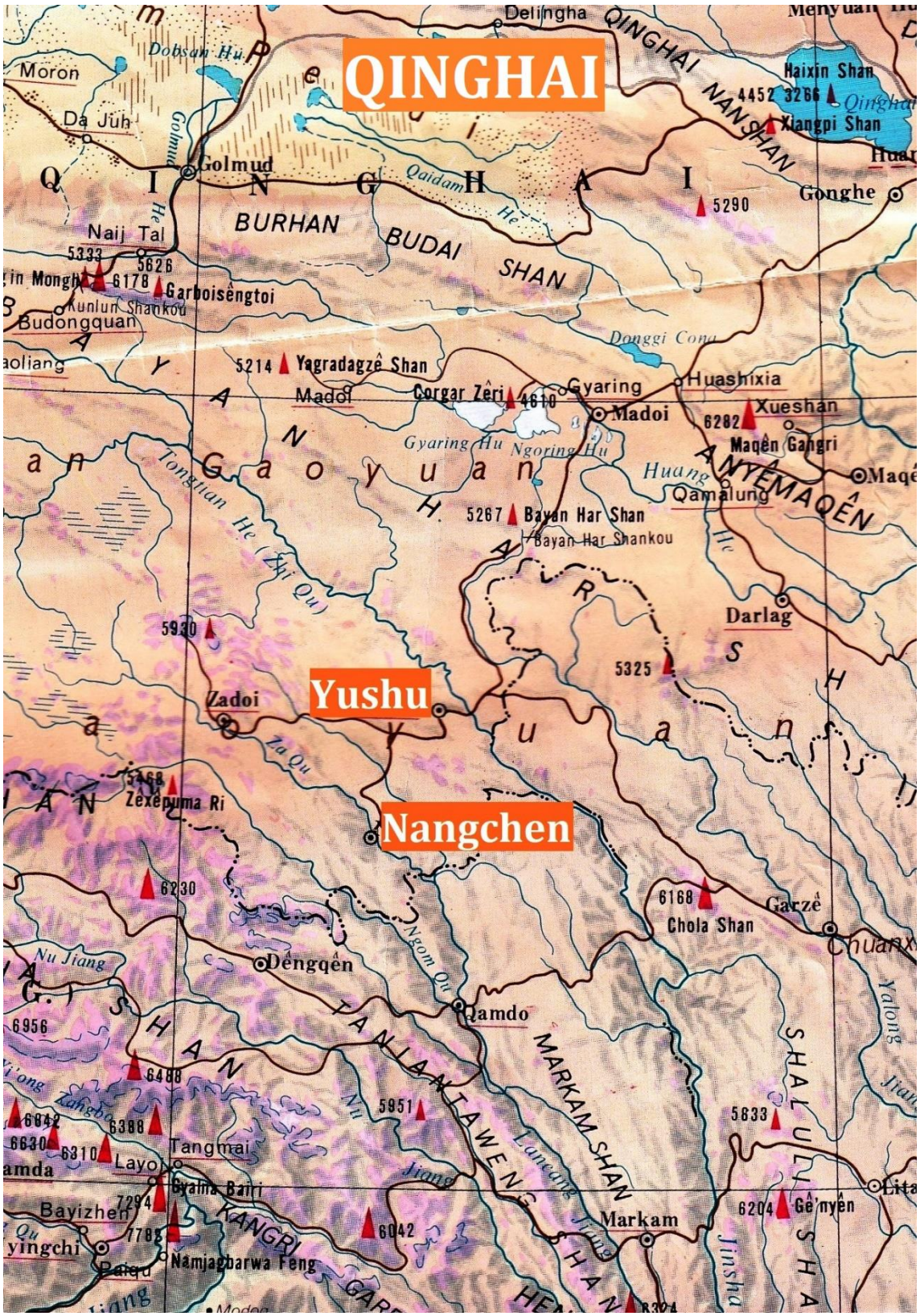
Peaks and Monasteries

Nangchen Kingdom and veiled mountains in Yushu Prefecture

After the Mt. Siguniang Second International Mountains and Outdoor Forum that was held in October 1 8 – 20, Mr. Tsuyoshi Nagai and I, elderly pair, flew to Yushu of Qinghai Province on October 22. Although a period of stay was as short as only one week, we could gain positive yields. Nangchen is said to be a kingdom of Tibetan religion having more than 90 monasteries in the county and has countless rock peaks of 5,000m which inspires visitors particularly climbers.

In succession to searching peaks and monasteries in Nangchen, we headed to north of Yushu to find veiled least-known mountains "Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m" massif (Chinese name: Mt. Katojowo).
Air flight from Chengdu to Yushu takes one and half hours.




QINGHAI
Yushu
Nangchen
Delingha
QINGHAI NANSHAN
Haixin Shan
Xiangpi Shan
Gonghe
Golmud
Moron
Da Juh
Dobsan Hu
Qaidam He
BURHAN BUDAI SHAN
Naij Tal
Garboisêngtoi
Kunlun Shankou
Budongquan
Yagradagzê Shan
Madoi
Corgar Zêri
Gyaring
Huashixia
Xueshan
Maqên Gangri
Gyaring Hu
Ngoring Hu
Huang He
Qamalung
ANYÊMAQÊN
Bayan Har Shan
Bayan Har Shankou
Tongtian He (Zhi Qu)
Darlag
Zadoi
Za Qu
Zexêpuma Ri
Chola Shan
Garzê
Dêngqên
Ngom Qu
Qamdo
Nu Jiang
TANJANTAWENG SHAN
MARKAM SHAN
SHALULI SHAN
Yalong Jiang
Tangmai
Layo
Gyalna Bairi
Bayizhen
Namjagbarwa Feng
Markam
Gê'nyên
Jinsha
Lancang Jiang
Nu Jiang
Zangbo
Gaoyuan
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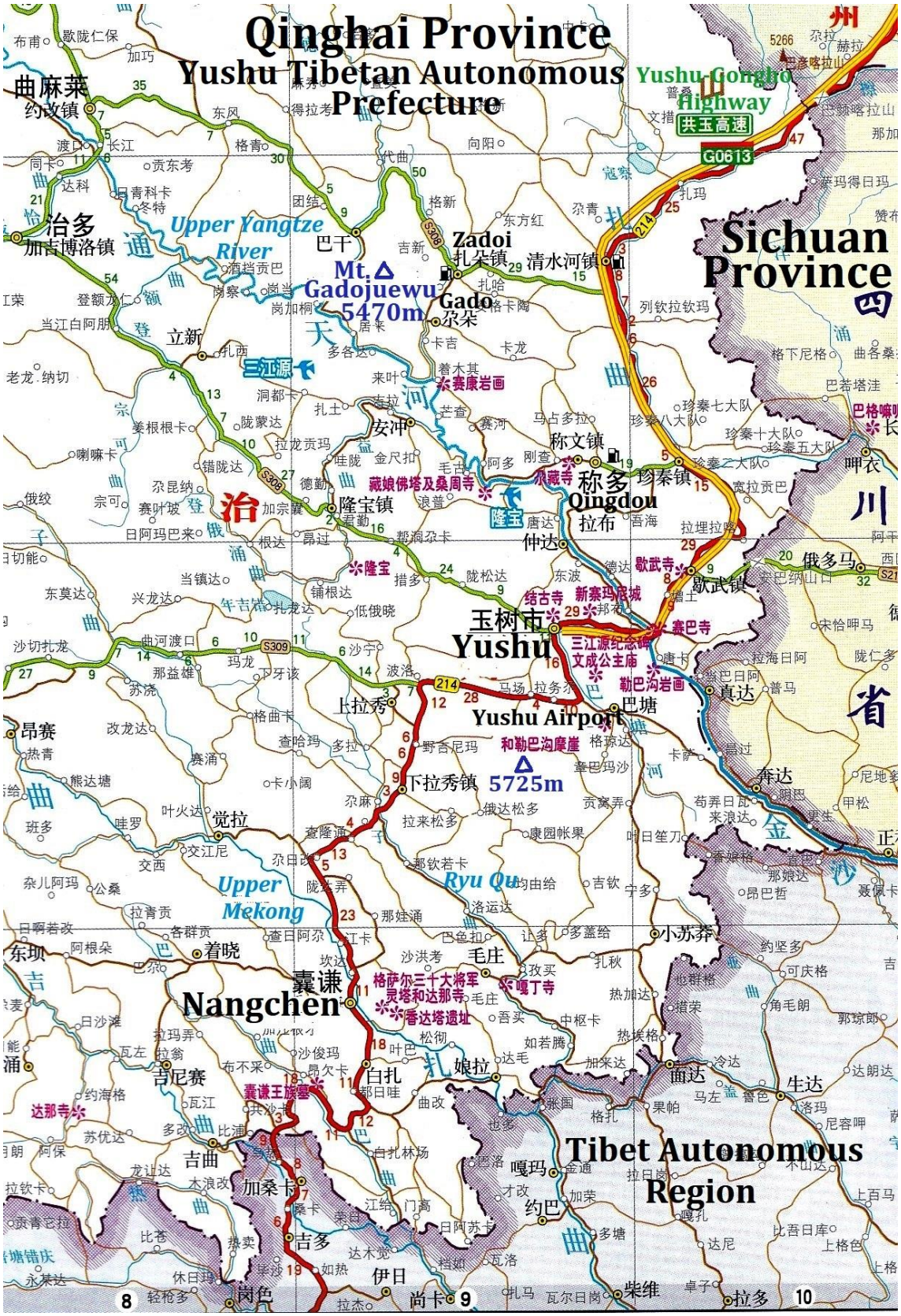


Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m is shown on the above map.

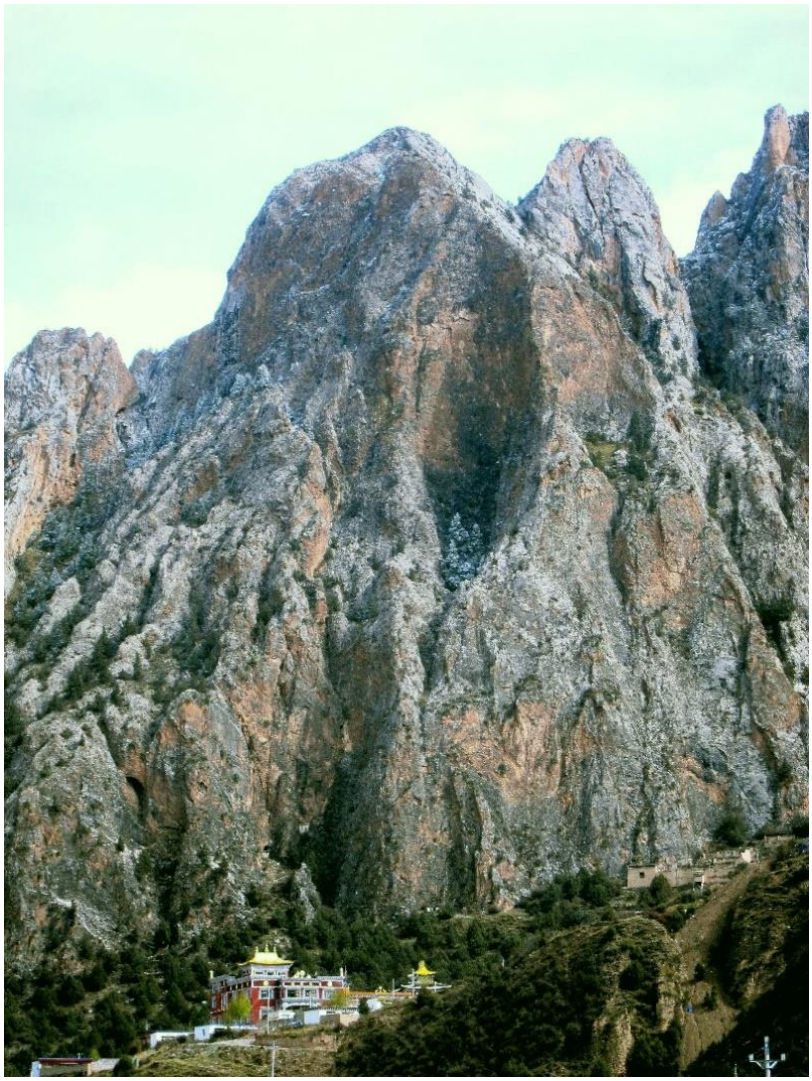
As the place is reaching Yushu airport 3860m, outstanding peaks 5,000 to 5700m are appearing to north.

We arrived at Yushu airport at 09:30 and stayed in Yushu Sun Lake Hotel. View of Jeku historical monastery (below) and light-up of the town (next page) attract tourists.

Beautiful Light-up of Yushu town

Nangchen- Kingdom of Tibetan Buddhism

On October 23 we drove from Yushu town to Nangchen.first having crossed a high pass and then went through a gorge with rock peaks with a monastery shown in the left.



Nangchen County is the birthplace of Yushu and has been the political, economic, and cultural center of Yushu in its history for more than 600 years.

In Han Dynasty~early Tang Dynasty, county belonged to the Sumba Kingdom of Women.

Upper Mekong River "Zachu" flows through Nangchen town.

Upper Mekong River "Zachu" (Lancang Jiang) flows through Nangchen town.

Golden Buddha Statue and 108 Stupas in Nangchen town

Geography and Potentials of Nangchen

Nangchen Count is located in the southeast of Yushu Prefecture, its south and southeast are adjacent to Tingchen, Chamdo, Riwoche consists of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and its west and northwest connects with Dzato (Zadoi) County, north and northeast with Yushu County. The Nangchen County has nine townships and one town with a total population of 105,800.
The county seat Shamda Town is located in the river valley of Upper Mekong area, agriculture is its major economy with supplements of animal husbandry. The average elevation is 3644m above sea level and average temperature is 3.8°C.

With a warm and moist Climate Nangchen is very rich in natural resources:
The county has available pastures of 442,413 ha or 86% of total area of the county, and arable land of 7,333 ha. In addition to abundant precipitation, there is abundant surface water, all belonging to the Mekong River water system. Zachu, Zichu, Palchu. Rechu and Jichu rivers flow in parallel from northwest to southeast throughout the county, and they reserve 142.59kw hydrological energy in theory. The County provides 65,500 cubic meters of water for per person, which is 7.4 times of the world's average per capita water amount and 24 times of that for China.

The 1st Round6–Travel thru Nangchen Kingdom October 23~25

Our objectives in Nangchen are A. to view rock peaks and veiled mountains B. to visit monasteries. On October 23, we moved from Yushu to Nangchen as aforementioned. We crossed a high pass of 4493m, a tributary of the Mekong, Rechu, two passes of 4118m and 4324m. We visited Golden Buddha Statue and 108 Stupas in the afternoon

High pass 4493m

Rechu, a tributary of Mekong River

On October 24, we searched for prominently towering rock peaks en-route of the new road west to Zadoi County. To our bad fortune however the weather was getting worse and it started to snow when we passed through a breathtaking deep gorge and then crossed a high pass of 4700m. Nevertheless, we managed to take pictures as below on the way and return. These are below (Water fall & gorge en-route to Zadoi County)

5000m peak en-route to Zadoi

(above two pictures) 5000m peaks en-route to Zadoi

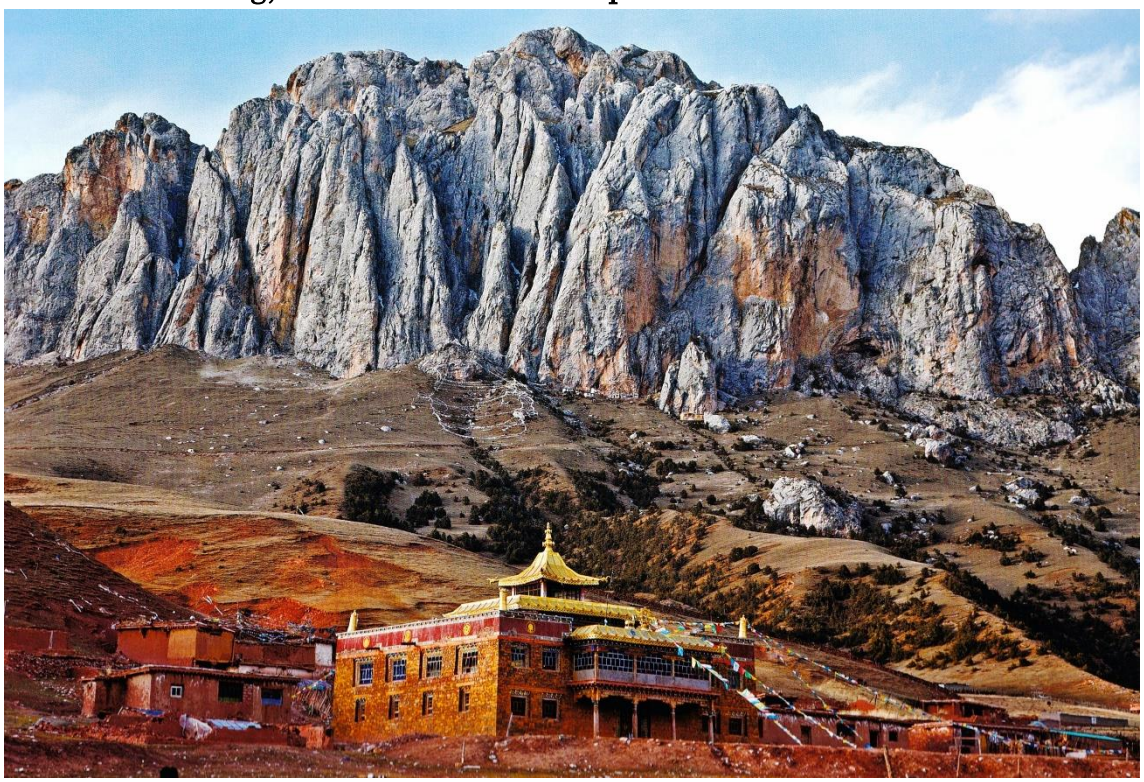
After coming back from tracing the new road to Zadoi, we went to “Khar Grand Canyon Scenic Spot. We stood in awe of shining Khar Monastery at 4230m hanging on the cliff.

On the way to the Khar Grand Canyon Scenic Spot an alluring 5000m peak was viewed as below.

On the way back to Nangchen town, we stopped at Baizha Ancient Salt fields as below.

Combination of Peak and Monastery shown below

The earliest monastery in the Kham area, parallel to the Yumbulagang Palace in Tsetang, South Tibet. This temple was built in 1069.



Blessing!

On October 25 we crossed a high pass 4645m sharing the Mekong main stream and Rechu, a tributary, while snowing. Purpose of the visit was to see famous monasteries and Tibetan mastiff breeding house.

Awang (left) Driver (right) - On the pass 4645m - Tom Nakamura

Tibetan mastiffs in breeding house

Breeding house of Tibetan mastiffs

On the way we heard from our capable Tibetan guide Awang (since 2009) about current situation in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) / Qinghai Province and related information.

1. Tibetan are unable to obtain a passport. Even a permit to visit Hong Kong is difficult for Tibetan in TAR.
2. Controls in TAR are getting tighter and tighter. Even Chinese are unable to enter sacred place near Miling (foreigners were prohibited).
3. Being compared with TAR where Dalai Lama 14th influence is prevailing, Qinghai Province is under influence of Panchen Lama, now a high official of the Beijing Administration. This means that control by the government is less tight in Qinghai Province than in TAR. Therefore, many monasteries are being constructed in Qinghai Province.
4. 50% of Yaks in west China live in Qinghai Province.
5. Chinese from Sichuan is not many in Qinghai Province while 90% of Chinese in TAR are from Sichuan.
6. Price of catapillar fungus is still going up.
7. Foreigners may pass through Chamdo city only when they get a special permit from authorities in Shanghai or Beijing, but they cannot stay in Chamdo.

We visited famous Gadin monastery in Rechu bend at 3600m. Then we drove up the beautiful stream of Rechu to north for returning to Yushu. On the way back, we came across snow-capped 5000m peaks north of Yushu. Pictures follow.

Gadin monastery in Rechu bend (above) Rechu (below)

5000m peak west face east of Rechu north of Yushu (1)

5000m peak west face east of Rechu north of Yushu (2)

Nunnery

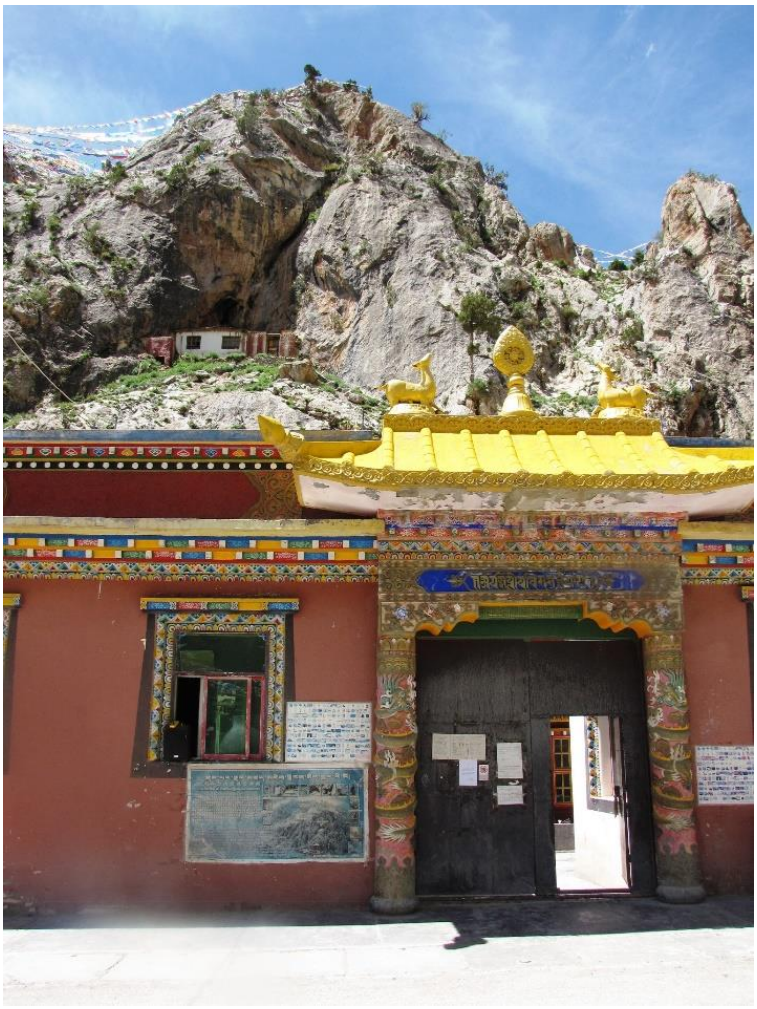
Golden buddha

Yushu Batang Airport 3860m

Now we came back to Yushu from Nangchen. Finally, we visited the Un Shin Kong Jo memorial place.

The first round of this trip was over. And we started the second round to search for the least-known mountains north of Yushu town.

The right picture is a memorial place of Un Shin Kong Jo who married with Tibetan King in the 7th century.



On the pass sharing Mekong main stream and Rechu

The 2nd Round–Searching for Unknown Mountains – October 26

Our objective was to approach the least-known and veiled mountains "Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m" massif. We requested Awang and driver to gather as much information as possible on the said mountain massif. We first checked the location by iPhone as below.

The massif is located west of Zodoi and Gado towns some 140km NNW of Yushu town.

On October 26 we left Yushu town for Mt. Gdojuewu. We soon entered the highway Yushu~Xinning (800km). The road once crosses the Tong Tien He (Upper Yangtze River where a monument of the three rivers sources: Mekong, Yangtze, and Yellow rivers.

The highway runs to NEE through grasslands in an altitude of 4200~4700m. Yaks often cross the road in spite there are fences. We left the highway at Qingshuihe junction.

High pass 4600m on a road from the highway to Gado / Zadoi town in the west

Winter is coming in Qinghai Plateau 4200~4700m in late October (1)

Winter is coming in Qinghai Plateau 4200~4700m in late October (2)

View to west from the high pass 4600m – Mt. Gadojuewu massif east face

Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m main peak east face seen from the high pass 4600m

Sangkong monastery at 4100m close to Mt. Gadojuewu masssif

Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m (right), Sister peak (left)

Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m

Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m

Sister peak ca. 5400m of Mt. Gadojuewu 5470m

Tibetan mastiff rock

We returned to Yushu.

Monastery in Yushu

Light-up in Yushu town

Aerial views are enjoyed in a flight from Yushu to Chengdu.

Gangga massif 5000~5600m east of Chola Shan

5000~5700m massif east of Chola Shan

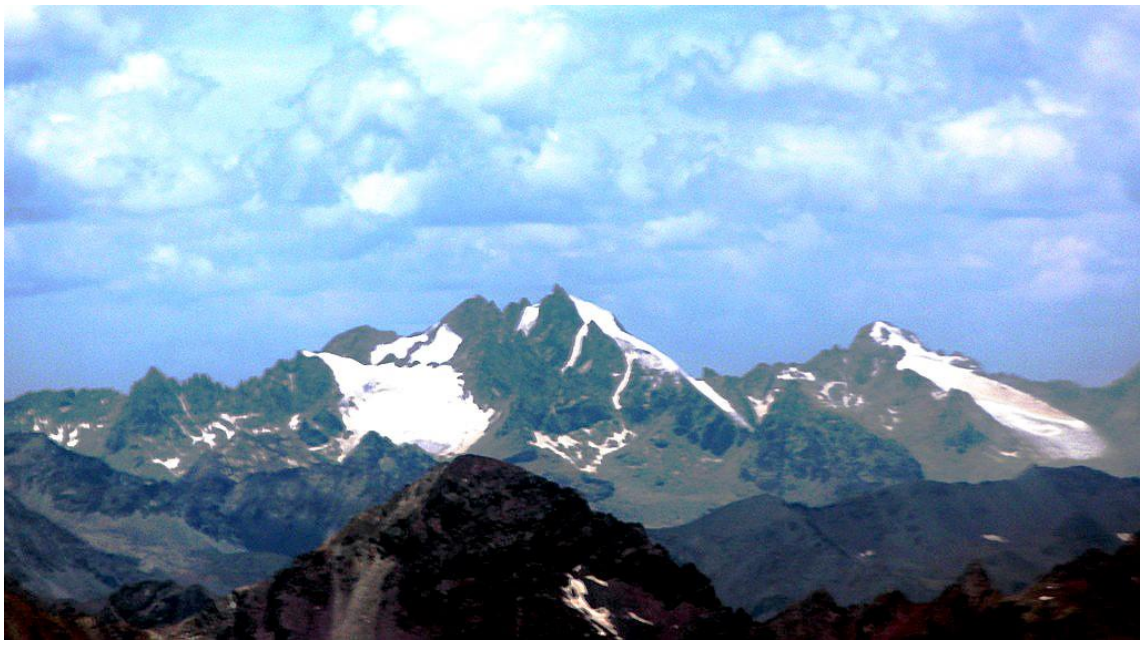
Gangga massif 5000~5600m rock peaks

Minya Konka (Gongga Shan) 7556m (right) and satellite peaks

Supplements

1. Summer July 2018 – Yushu to Nangchen

Flying from Chengdu to Yushu airport – peak (right) Sejong 5716m



Peak ca. 5600m north of Yushu airport

5000~5700m peaks north of Yushu airport

5725m north of Yushu airport

Rechu, a tributary of the Mekong River (Za Qu)

Upper Mekong River (Za Qu) flowing through Nangchen Kingdom

Nangchen town

Flowers are abundant in summer (at 4600m) in Nangchen

Blue poppies at 4600m in Nangchen

2. From a photo book “Scenic of Nangchen” published in Nangchen, 2013

Ruins of Nangchen King’s Palace north of Nangchen town

Horse race in Nangchen

King Gesar opera in Tana Monastery

Tibetan opera

3. Statue of legendary King Gesar in Yushu town