

China & Tibet 2005

Qonglai

Yasushi Yamanoi of Japan made a solo first ascent on the North Wall of **Potala** in the Siguniang area, reached from the Shuangqiaoguo valley. The route, 'Jiayou', 850m, consisted of 18 pitches at 5.8 A3+.

A Swiss expedition made what is probably the first ascent of **Eagle Rock Peak (c5300m)** via the S face, 700m 7a/A3. Christof Looser, Martin Ruggli and Lukas Durr reached the summit on 14 October. During the same period an American team consisting of Chad Kellogg and four others spent five weeks in the Qonglai mountains. They climbed the west peak of **Luotou (5666m)** before attempting a line to the right of the Fowler/Ramsden route on the NW face of **Siguniang**. Bad weather forced a retreat and they moved to the Chiwen gorge. Here they climbed the north ridge of the '**Angry Wife**' (**5005m**), which lies on the ridge north-west of Celestial Peak (5413m). They then crossed into the Shuangqiaoguo valley before climbing the rocky tower of **Daoquo (5466m)** whose headwall provided sustained 5.10 climbing on excellent granite, leading to fragile climbing on the summit block.

Tommy Chandler and three companions visited the nearby Bipeng valley, making an ascent of the NW buttress of **Peak 5202**.

Daxue Shan

In September 2005 a British expedition consisting of Dick Isherwood, Toto Gronlund, Peter Rowat and Dave Wynne-Jones attempted the unclimbed **Gonkala** peaks (5992m, 5928m) near Garze in western Sichuan. The first of these is also known as **Kalawani (5992m)**. Their efforts were brought to an end by a party of 40 monks from the Khur Chong monastery who ordered them off the mountain. The group switched to **Haizi Shan (5833m)** but bad weather forced a retreat. (*See article 'A Cautionary Tale' p71.*)

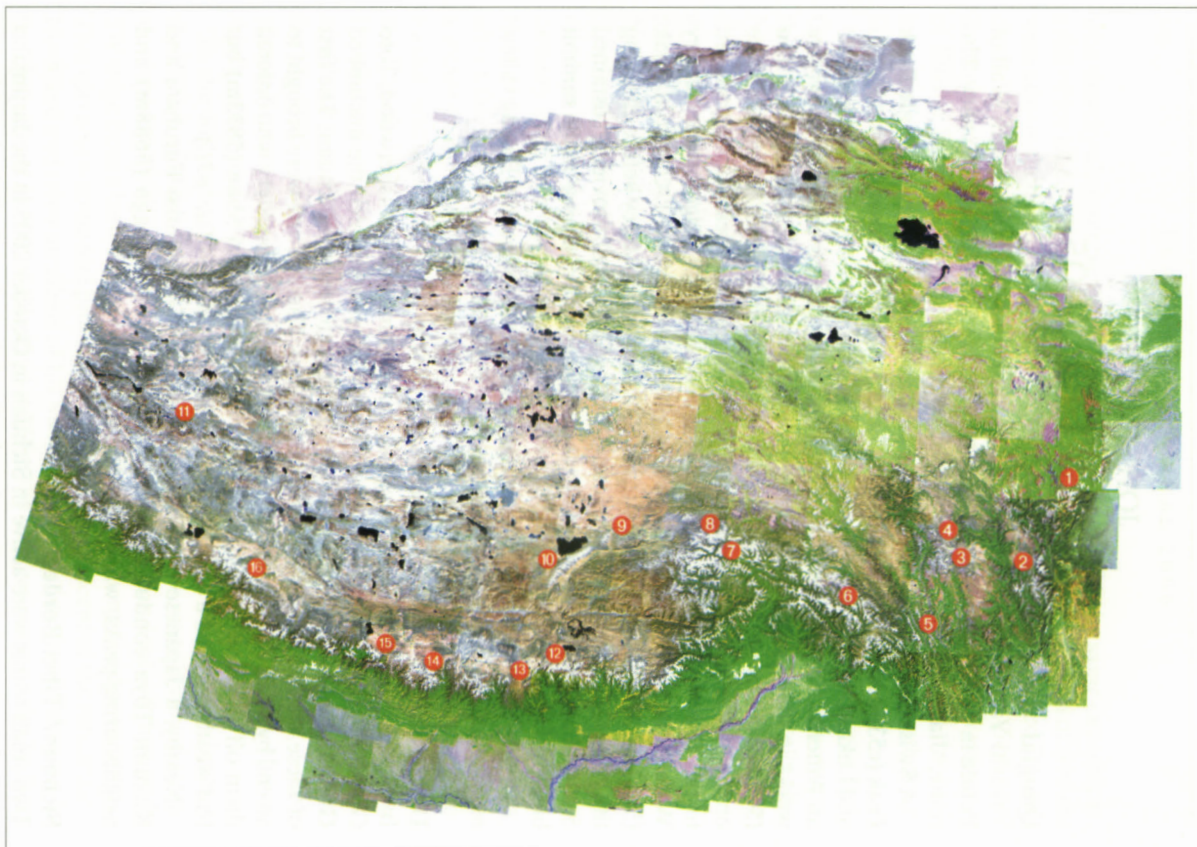
Nearby, a Japanese expedition consisting of Toshihiko Furuhashi and Kazumi Toya conducted a reconnaissance of **Gangga (5688m)** and neighbouring peaks, which lie south of Garze.

Sichuan/ Tibet Border

Two small teams were active in Sichuan in October 2005 in the Jarjinjabo area of the Shaluli Shan, based at the Zophu pasture. Both had ambitions of making the first ascent of **Xiashe (5833m)** but the prize fell to Karen McNeill of Canada and Pat Deavoll of New Zealand who reached the summit via the S face and SW ridge on 13 October after a four-day climb. Ed Douglas and Duncan Tunstall of the UK made the first ascent of the north face, reaching the summit on 16 October and then descending the west ridge in a five-day round trip. They named the line *Don't Cook Yak In Anger* indicating an appropriate degree of stiff upper lip. (*See article 'Xiashe North Face', p35.*)

KEY TO CHINA/TIBET MAP

- 1 Qonglai Shan -
Singuniang
- 2 Daxue Shan -
Minya Konka
- 3 Batang -
Dangchezhengla
- 4 Jarjinjabo
- 5 Meile Xue Shan -
Kawa Karmo
- 6 Kangri Karmo
- 7 Nyainqentanglha East -
Namla Karmo
- 8 Nyainqentanglha East -
Sepu Kangri
- 9 Nyainqentanglha West -
Samdain Kangsang
- 10 Nyainqentanglha West -
Nyainqentanglha
- 11 Nganglong Kangri
- 12 Lunana Himal -
Kangphu Gang
- 13 Chomolhari
- 14 Everest Region
- 15 Shisha Pangma
- 16 Kaqur Kangri



South of the Sichuan-Tibet Highway, a Japanese expedition consisting of Shigeru Aoki and six members explored the massif containing **Xiangqiuqieke (5863m)**, whose highest point is the unnamed **Peak 5870m**. They reached the glacier lake Tsonahou Tso and made the first ascent of an unnamed peak of 5160m.

Nyainqentanglha East

The spectacular peaks of this area continue to attract high class attention. Mick Fowler, Chris Watts, Phil Amos and Adam Thomas attacked the shapely **Kajaqiao (6447m)** and **Manamcho (c6300m)** from the north. The weather in this area once again lived up to its reputation with high winds, incessant snowfall and low temperatures. Fowler and Watts succeeded in making the first ascent of Kajaqiao via the W face and NW ridge in a nine-day epic. Thomas and Amos had less success on Manamcho and were turned back by the weather at 5800m. (*See article 'Through Permits and Powder', p2.*)

Sean Waters and Jo Kippax of New Zealand had their sights on the unclimbed peaks at the head of the Lawa valley, in particular **Birutaso (6550m)**. Reaching base camp on 6 October 2005, they experienced heavy snowfall for much of the next month as they placed a series of camps. The final push lasted 16 days, the summit being reached at 10pm on 5 November via the east ridge.

Tamotsu Nakamura continued his explorations of the eastern **Nyainqentanglha** travelling in the steps of Kingdon-Ward up the Yi'ong Tsangpo valley from Gongtsa on the Yi'ong Tso, to the village of Bake, bringing back yet more spectacular photos of unknown, unexplored peaks. (*See article 'A Journey to the Forbidden Yi'ong Tsangpo', p19.*)

Nyainqentanglha West and Central Tibet

Qizi (6206m) is only half a day's drive from Lhasa and a straightforward climb. It is becoming an increasingly popular objective. Seven students of Hong Kong University, together with their five instructors, reached the summit on 4 and 5 August 2005 and a large group of young Chinese climbers were on the mountain in September. In July the 'Beauty and the Beast' charity expedition put the supermodel Jiang Peilin, former Miss World Maria Garcia and 19 other Chinese celebrities on the summit.

An expedition consisting of seven 'Old Boys' from the Keio University Alpine Club, average age 66, made the first ascent of **Kaluxung, 6647m**, in the Noijinkangshan massif, south-west of Lhasa. Eiichiro Kasai (64) and Tadao Shintani (61) reached the summit on 28 September 2005.

Himalaya

Amidst the continuing repeats of existing routes from Tibet on Cho Oyu and Shisha Pangma, one particular expedition stood out. A French team consisting of Christophe Moulin, Christian Trommsdorff, Patrick Wagnon,

Yannick Graziani, Stephane Benoist, Aymeric Clouet, Patrice Glairon-Rappaz and Yann Bonneville attacked the spectacular north side of Chomo Lonzo via two routes. On 11 May Trommsdorff, Graziani and Wagnon reached the summit of **Chomo Lonzo N (7199m)** via the W glacier and NW ridge. On 16 May Benoist and Glairon-Rappaz reached the same summit after completing a three-day ascent of a direct line on the W face. On the 19th Trommsdorff, Graziani and Wagnon traversed the N peak and onwards to **Chomo Lonzo Central (7540m)** which they reached at 6.15 pm on 21 May. Both peaks were previously unclimbed. The ridge continuing from the Central Peak to the main peak of Chomo Lonzo still remains untrodden.

On the south side of Shisha Pangma a commercial expedition led by Victor Saunders made the first ascent of **Tsha Tung (5995m)** which lies to the south of the Nyanang Phu Chu between Nyalam and Shisha Pangma base camp.

West Tibet

Derek Buckle, Alasdair Scott, Bill Thurston and Martin Scott visited the region around **Dobzebo (6429m)** in the Gangdise Shan in September/October 2005. They made first ascents of the higher south peak via the SW ridge and the north peak (6412m) via the south face. (*See article 'Dobzebo and the Battle of the Mountains', p55.*)

In 2003 a party from the Royal Grammar School, Guildford made a number of first ascents in the **Loinbo Kangri** region of the Gangdise Shan, including **Tarlug Changtse (6210m)**.

Daniel Carrick, Naomi Bessey, Joseph Johnstone and Benjamin Gready of Imperial College climbed a number of unclimbed peaks in the Shahkangsham massif, on the main highway north of Tsochen. Bessey and Carrick made first ascents of **Peak 6210** on 8 August via the SW ridge, and **Peak 6390** on 10 August via the west ridge. Johnstone and Gready made the first ascent of the west summit of **Peak 6603** on 3 August 2005 via the south ridge. They also attempted **Shahkangsham (6822m)** via the SW ridge but turned back at 6000m because of avalanches. The weather was poor in late July, one camp being flooded out on the journey in, but cleared in August.

Kunlun

Four members of a Kyoto University Alpine Club expedition made the first ascent of **Yume Muztagh (6345m)** which lies about 16km north-east of the Xinjiang-Tibet Highway at N 35° 41' E 79° 41'. It is the highest point of a group of 6000m peaks lying near the road, about 530km drive south of Yecheng. Toshio Itoh (66), Eizo Maeda (61), Hiromitsu Izutani (61) and Toshikazu Kurimoto (56) reached the summit on 1st August 2005. Base camp was established in the Dahonglutian Truck Stop, a warm and 'luxurious' alternative to tented accommodation.