

fluted ground. Below the lowest point of the east ridge I decided to continue right, aiming for runnels that appeared to lead directly to the summit. The shortest line to the ridge above me appeared to finish up mixed ground, which looked difficult in the half-light of dawn. After two previously unsuccessful attempts on the northwest face, I craved success and so opted for a more certain line. Or so I thought.

As daylight approached and I gained height, it became apparent I would have to cross a deep couloir. An active band of seracs on the east ridge towered above and gave me cause for concern. Deciding that crossing below the seracs was too risky, I climbed a rib of mixed ground until directly beneath them (100m, Scottish V, 5). The terrain prior to this had gradually increased in angle, being 60-80°, at a grade of Scottish IV/V, and quite tenuous due to the unconsolidated nature of the snow.

Moving left, I climbed steep, hard ice to reach the crest of the east ridge. I continued up this until ca 200m below the summit, where I bivouacked in a large crevasse as my hands and feet needed re-warming. It was 2:30 p.m. and I had taken 13 hours to reach this ca 6,350m point on the ridge.

The following morning I attempted to reach the summit but found the way above very crevassed and far too dangerous for a solo climber. I decided to go down and followed the ridge to its lowest point, where I made two 30m rappels on the northeast face and then down-climbed directly to reach my traverse line followed on the ascent. By 1:30 p.m. I had reached my starting point in the valley at 4,300m and later decided to name my route to the east ridge, Love and Hate (Alpine D+/TD-).

NICK BULLOCK, U.K.

Editor's note: the east ridge of Teng Kang Poche has probably been climbed on several occasions from the Lumding Valley to the south, and was certainly climbed in 1984.

Pharilapcha-Machermo Peak (6,017 m), first official ascent. The first authorized ascent of this recently permitted trekking peak in the Khumbu valley was made from the west in spring 2003. The team comprised Isrofil Ashurly (Russia), Marcelo Rey Belo (Brazil), Juliana N. Bechara Belo (Brazil), Josko Bozic (Croatia), Stipe Bozic (Croatia), Valentine Grakovitch (Russia), Viktor Groselj (Slovenia), Vladimir Mesaric (Croatia), Vladimir Shataev (Russia), Rafael Vodisek (Slovenia), and a Sherpa team. Their route is said to follow the west ridge.

SEB CONSTANT, France

Pharilapcha-Machermo Peak (6,017 m), first ascent of north face (The Bonfire of the Vanities), and southwest side (The Bridge of Lost Desire). The north face of this peak, dominating Gokyo village, remained virgin. Climbing it had been a dream of mine for seven years, ever since the beauty of the lines running down that rocky, shady wall, like yogurt flowing over a dark surface, had impressed me during a trek in the Khumbu. Of course, I knew destiny would bring me there again, but when? Finally Jerome Mercader and I arrived in the autumn of 2003. Before our north face ascent we established The Bridge of Lost Desire on the southwest side during a reconnaissance of the peak. This showed us an easy descent for our north face attempt.

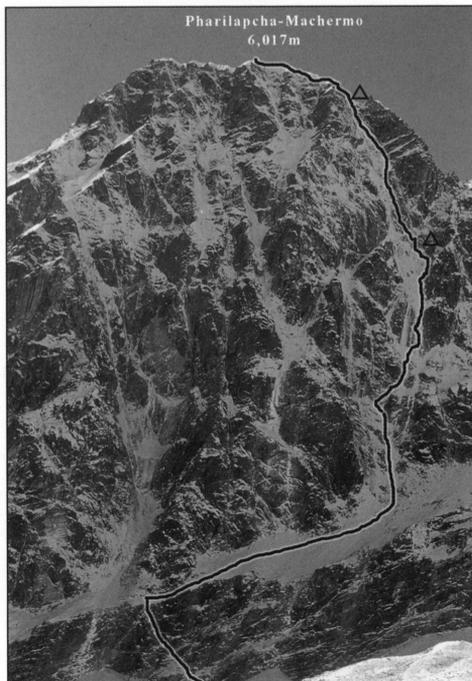
Because we are lazy boys we set up our base camp at a lodge in Machermo village, one

day's walk from the foot of the face. Why do we require the services of a cook, sir-dar, and staff on a mountain like this, when you can travel so light? We were just two friends ready for a long and sustained alpine-style adventure.

We climbed on the right side of the 1,000m north face via a system of gullies. We adopted a very light style, carrying rucksacks that weighed only eight kilos and held three days food, one canister of gas, a small stove, one small Thermarest, one sleeping bag, one bivouac tent constructed by myself (weighs only one kilo) and our climbing gear; five ice screws, a set of nuts, six pitons, and five cams. Due to the cold weather we had to climb in down suits.

In total we climbed 27 pitches, with two bivouacs on the face in the micro tent. Many pitches had very thin snow or ice covering the rock and were hard to protect due to the poor quality of the snow. The hardest thing was to put in rock protection. It was a challenging and amazing climb, and the style of our ascent required us to ponder on the prospect of retreat with our minimal rack. We summited on the third day, atop a thin snow ridge with a complete view of Everest and Cho-Oyu. And we finally had sun to warm our bodies.

We established The Bridge of Lost Desire (ca 350m, V M4 WI3), on November 18 in a 12-hour round trip from a 5,200m high camp. The route was 11 pitches to the summit ridge and began at an obvious snow cone 600m to the right of the west col. First, there was a mixed wall (M4) above the rimaye, after which we followed a snow couloir for three pitches (50°). Above, was one M4 crux section to surmount a small step, after which two pitches in a snow couloir brought us to rocky terraces. From this point you can see the summit ridge, which we reached in three pitches (snow from 45-65°). Here you join the traditional route (I guess, because we saw a sling on a block). Two exposed pitches led to easy ground



The north face of Pharilapcha-Machermo, showing The Bonfire of the Vanities. *Seb Constant*



The southwest face of Pharilapcha-Machermo, showing The Bridge of Lost Desires. *Seb Constant*



Jerome Mercader in action on the north face of Pharilapcha-Machermo.
Seb Constant

and the top. To descend we climbed down the couloir to the rocky terraces and then followed a loose, rocky ridge 20m to the right of the couloir. Before the last wall (above the rimaye) we crossed left to the couloir and made rappel.

Le Bucher des Vanités (The Bonfire Of The Vanities) (1,000m, VI M5 WI4), November 22-24. The route: three pitches (some M4) up the first wall to a long snow band that splits the lower part of the face. The first crux lies in the couloir system above (The

Three Gullies; three pitches of snow and ice to 80/85°). We made a tight bivouac on a snow ledge at 5,670m. From here, a two-pitch traverse left enabled us to start the delicate M5 dance in the "Perdition Wall." A gully continued up right and gave five pitches to 65°, with the last crux on crumbly rock (M5) before joining the summit ridge. We made our second bivouac at 5,960m, just under the summit ridge. Next day, two pitches on the sharp ridge above led to easy ground and the summit. We down-climbed the southwest side of the peak by The Bridge of Lost Desires.

SEB CONSTANT, *France*

Hungchi, first ascent. A five-hour walk northward from Gokyo along the right bench of the Ngojumba Glacier brought us to a plateau commanding a good view of Everest, Cho Oyu, Gyachung Kang, and Hungchi (7,036m). We proceeded to base camp, which had an entire view of Hungchi and beyond. We passed a lovely grassland, studded with rocks we called "the Japanese Garden." Just out of advanced base camp the snow-covered slope gets gradually steeper and we began fixing ropes along the route to the foot of a long side ridge that leads directly to the main line of the southwest ridge. We reached the crest via 60° snow-covered slopes.

We followed the snow-covered ridge until we came to the base of a massive rock, where we pitched Camp 1. From there, we found a couloir on the rock face, fixed the main rope to the left of it, and continued up. Although it was technically a Grade III-IV section, the altitude made hammering a piton a difficult task. We ended up pitching Camp 2 right on the narrow ridge. After following the snow ridge for some time, we moved on to the eastern flank, traversing a 50-60° ice face.

With utmost care we followed the ridge, which was much narrower than expected and was a series of continual ups and downs. Finally we came to the foot of a snow wall on the right. This is where we had to retreat in 2001 because of soft snow.

Finally, at 12:10 a.m. on April 19 we stood on the summit. We anchored ourselves to a piton on the narrow summit, exchanged messages with base camp, and took pictures. Half-an-hour passed all too soon and mist began creeping in. We buried national flags of both countries under the snow, and left the summit. Expedition members were: Takashi Shiro (leader), Kanji