

Chearoco south summit, East Pillar. On May 19-20, Denis Levaillant and Alain Mesili climbed the East Pillar of the south summit of Chearoco (6,127m or 6,014m). This is possibly the first route climbed on the vast east face of this remote triple-summited massif, located southeast of the Illampu-Ancohumá group in the central Cordillera Real. The pillar itself is 550m high and gave difficulties of 5+ (French) on good granite, with sections of mixed at 75° (M5) and 80° ice. From the pillar's top, another 150m up a delicate, narrow, and classically Andean ridge, with unconsolidated snow, dramatic cornices, and no worthwhile protection, led to the summit. The pair climbed the TD+ route from a camp at 5,200m three hours' walk from the face.

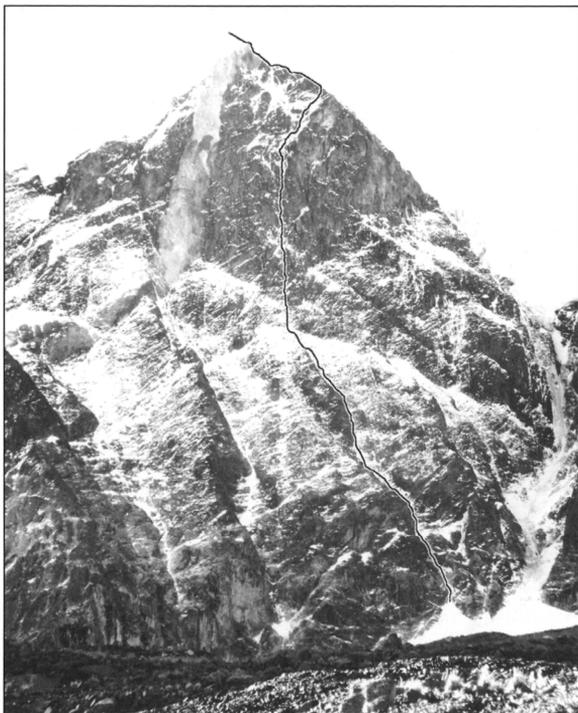
This central area of the Real, with adjacent peaks such as Cazalda (5,650m), Kelluani (a.k.a. Quelluani, 5,912m), and Chachacomani (6,074m), is the least explored of the range, and the exact lines of routes on the big peaks are not well documented. Despite a handful of ascents from the west and south flanks, Chearoco is infrequently climbed, and the east face holds many possibilities.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO* Editor, *CLIMB* magazine

Illimani, Phajsi Face, Inti Face, and Puerta del Sol; Pico Layca Kholu, Acalanto. In June Fumitaka Ichimura, Tatsuro Yamada, Yuki Satoh, and I established four new routes on the south face of Illimani (6,439m), the highest mountain in Bolivia's Cordillera Real.

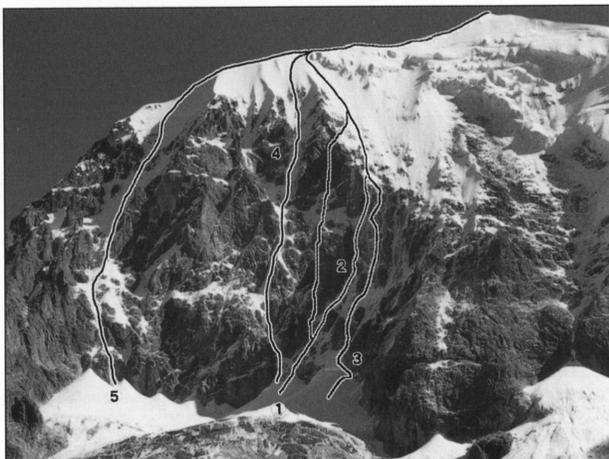
In late May, after one-and-a-half months of climbing in Alaska, we flew to La Paz and went to Illimani's normal route to acclimatize. Then we returned to La Paz to rest and prepare for three weeks of climbing. We approached Mesa Khala (4,700m) with six horses and four porters. Although there we had trouble with the porters, we made our base camp the day we departed.

On June 14 Yamada and Satoh gained Illimani's south peak (main summit) by a new route, Phajsi Face (1,200m, TD+ WI4+). The line followed an obvious ice line straight up to the upper snow slope in the center of the south face. Eight technical pitches and a 500m-long snow slope led to the easy summit ridge. They descended the West Ridge (normal route) to its base (Puente Roto, 4,400m), then had a long walk back to base camp.



Acalanto (Ichimura-Yokoyama, 2006), on the 950m south face of Pico Layca Kholu (6,159m). The controversial Alain Mesili (with Bruce Card, 1978), claimed the right-slanting corner high on the face, but inconsistencies surround his claim. *Katsutaka Yokoyama*

Pico Layca Kholu (6,159m) is a small satellite peak on the far southeastern end of the Illimani massif. [Frenchman Charles Wiener, with two local helpers, made the peak's first ascent in May 1877 and called it Pico de Paris—Ed.] But its south face was not so small and was vertical. There was a line straight up toward the summit in the center of the face. It was connected by thin ice and so beautiful. Ichimura and I started climbing at 3:00 a.m. on June 14, getting through the lower part before dawn. The upper part rose vertically, and the rock was loose. Pitch 13 was the crux (WI5R), thin and unstable with overhangs,



but the crux section was not as long as I expected. The long, sustained 15th pitch led to the summit ridge. We stood on the summit at 4:00 p.m. and descended the opposite side of the peak, walking on the glacier and reaching 5,600m by sunset. The next morning, after a short

The south face of Illimani (6,439m): (1) Puerta del Sol (Ichimura-Yokoyama, 2006). (2) Inti Face (Satoh-Yamada, 2006, no summit). (3) Phajsi Face (Satoh-Yamada, 2006). (4) Disputed route claimed by Mesili (with Jaeger, 1972). (5) Nada es Seguro (Hendricks-Hendricks-McNeill, 2001). The Southwest Ridge (Dowbenka-Ziegenhardt, 1983) follows the left skyline. The original South Face (Jacquier-Mesili, 1978) climbs a gully just out of the frame to the right. Also not shown: Gabarrou solo (1988).
Katsutaka Yokoyama



Fumitaka Ichimura leading the crux pitch of Puerta del Sol on Illimani. *Katsutaka Yokoyama*

walk on the ridge, we rappelled the west side of the ridge, four rappels landing us just above our base camp. We named our route Acalanto (950m, ED1 WI5R).

On June 22 Yamada and Satoh opened an alternate start, just to the left of the Phajsi Face, naming it the Inti Face (600m, TD+ WI5). Its six pitches were steeper and more beautiful than the original ones. They rappelled from halfway up, where their route meets the Phajsi Face at the snowfield. “Phajsi” and “Inti” mean “moon” and “sun” in the Aymara language.

On the same day Ichimura and I set our next target as the straight-up ice gully just left of Yamada and Satoh’s line. The first gully was easy (WI3), though it was hard to find the correct line. We then climbed thin ice and mixed terrain in the dark. By daybreak we started the crux pitch, 50m of continuous 90° thin ice with poor protection (WI5R). Then we followed a comfortable ice runnel for two pitches. Just below the upper snow slope there was no ice, so we dry-tooled (M5). The slope led to the summit ridge. We reached the summit at 1 p.m. and reversed our route, downclimbing and making over 10 rappels. Near the bottom I was hit by rockfall and injured my left leg, though it was not fractured. We got off the wall and reached ABC by sunset.

We climbed this route nearly at the summer solstice. In the ruins of Tiwanaku, near La Paz, there is a gate called Puerta del Sol, meaning “gate of the sun”; at summer solstice the sun rises just above this gate. Since the line we climbed rose toward the summit like the sun, we named the route Puerta del Sol (1,200m, ED1 WI5R M5).

KATSUTAKA YOKOYAMA, *Japan*

Editor’s note: Confusion exists regarding possible routes on the south face of Illimani. The controversial French climber, guide, and guidebook author Alain Mesili claims a 1972 route (TD WI4 and 5.5) just right of center (see photo) with the late, prolific Frenchman Nicolas Jaeger. Although Mesili has pioneered many impressive (confirmed) routes, repeated inconsistencies and contradictions, often from his partners, have recently clouded many of his claims. Serious doubts surround the supposed 1972 line. Also on this face, in 1988 renowned French alpinist Patrick Gabarrou soloed a route but its location is unknown.

CORDILLERA QUIMSA CRUZ

Cerro Sofia, west face and correction. [Page 275 of the 2005 AAJ reports a possible new route on the west face of Cerro Sofia (5,720m) by British climbers Matt Freear, Sarah Griffin, Tim Moss, and Ted Saunders—Ed.] On April 25, 2002, I teamed with the Dutch Gustaaf and Marjan Wijnands and climbed the west face of Cerro Sofia (we thought it might face southwest). We started from our high camp on the glacier at 5 a.m. and reached the ridge at 12 p.m. We chose a line on the far right of the face, close to the rocks. Gustaaf rated the climb as AD+/D-, with the following details for individual pitches: pitches 1-5, 50-55° (hard snow and ice); pitch 6, 65° (hard snow); pitch 7, 70° (hard snow and ice). We traversed to the summit, wanting to descend the north-northwest ridge. However, this ridge, though shown on our map, was nonexistent, and in bad weather we descended the way we came. The roundtrip took us 14 hours.

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