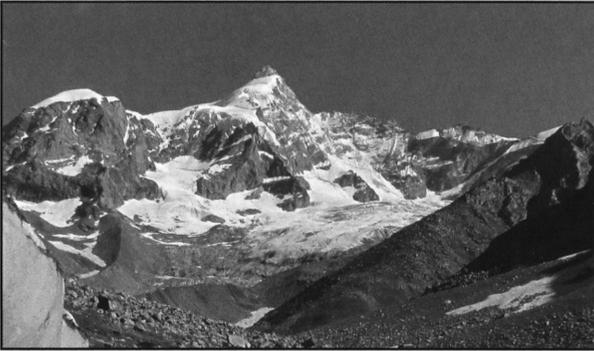


HIMACHAL PRADESH



Shiva Shankar West (left) and Shiva Shankar from Tarundi Valley.
Bruno Moretti

Shiva Shankar West, west face. The Pangri straddles the Himachal Pradesh–Jammu and Kashmir borders and is isolated for more than seven months of the year. The road into the area crosses 4,000m passes and is a difficult and adventurous journey even in summer. During winter the climate is arctic and the land blanketed with snow, making it impossible to enter or exit this region from November until May or June.

From mid-August to mid-September Lynn Iacobini De Fazio, Massimo Marcheggiani, and I, all instructors with the Italian Alpine Club, explored the Saichu Valley, the first of the Pangri's sub-valleys right of the Chenab. After reaching Udaipur via the Rothang Pass, we had to deal with the devastating consequences of the huge storm that days before had hit southern Asia and produced tragic flooding in Leh. The 65km road to Pangri, built in the 1990s along a narrow terrace suspended above the swirling Chenab River, had become a series of dangerous fords caused by an almost unbroken succession of landslides. Two of these forced us early into trekking mode, ferrying our loads from jeep to horses. We eventually reached the lush Saichu Valley, inhabited by hospitable Pangwali and Tibetan Buddhists. Two days' trekking took us to the narrow entrance to the Tarundi Valley, leading to the east side of Shiva (6,142). Horses were unable to go beyond this point, so we established base camp (3,535m), much lower than we wanted. Several days' bad weather intervened before we could establish advanced base at 3,830m (33°05'57.8" N, 76°36'59.8" E).

Taking advantage of a good weather window, we continued north up-valley, camping at 4,165m, 4,600m, and 5,080m, the last 20m above a col overlooking Sural Valley and dominated to the west by Peak 5,860m. Visible to the southwest was the huge northeast face and magic east pillar of Shiva. On September 1 we started up the face immediately east of the col, first climbing a 200m wall of very crumbly shale in huge unstable blocks, with difficulties up to UIAA V. Some of this was verglassed, and we had to climb in crampons. We then climbed a steep ice slope, followed by a snow shoulder that led to the 5,510m rounded dome of Shiva Shankar West (33°09'19.5" N, 76°36'48.9" E). This summit was first reached in 2005 by Italian Diego Stefani, who named it Zero Point. Continuing east would lead to the summit of Shiva Shankar (6,011m)—the Horn of Shiva. All information suggests that the two Italian expeditions are the only ones to have climbed from the Tarundi Valley. Two days of exhausting descent took us to base camp.

BRUNO MORETTI, CAI, Italy

Pangri Valley, mountaineering history; unclimbed objectives from the Saichu Valley. Early history in the Pangri was made by Japanese Junko Tabei, the first woman to summit Everest, who in 1988 made the first ascent of Shiva by the southwest face from the Parmar Valley (AAJ 1989). In 2001

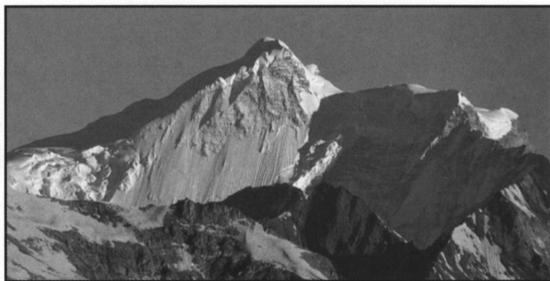
a Japanese team climbed Baihali Jot (6,290m) by the north ridge (AAJ 2002). In 2002 an Indian expedition made the second ascent of Shiva, following the 1988 route (AAJ 2003). In 2004 Chris Bonington, Harish Kapadia, and friends trekked north up the Saichu as far as the confluence of the Tarundi and Paphita valleys, then continued east up the latter to climb Jot Mund (5,130), Jambu Peak (5,105) and Pimu Peak (5,480) on the watershed between the Miyar and Paphita valleys. The following year Diego Stefani's expedition climbed Shiva Shankar West, as mentioned in the previous report.

In 2007 Bonington returned, this time going up the Sural Valley from the administrative capital, Killar. While he and Raj Kumar climbed Peak 5,027m, the other three members of his British team, Rob Ferguson, Graham Little, and Jim Lowther, attempted the northwest face of unclimbed Shiva Shankar (6,011m), failing due to rotten rock.

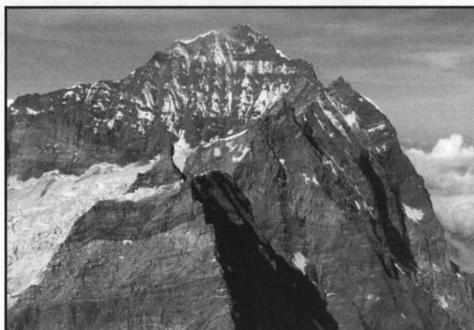
It was left to Japanese Kazuo Kozi, Hidetaka Lizuka, and Reiko Maruyama, with three Indian porters, to make the first ascent of Shiva Shankar (Sersank Peak, because it dominates the Sersank Pass to the north) the following year, via the route attempted by the British trio.

Many challenges remain, the most notable being the eastern and northern aspects of Shiva [attempted by Russians, see below]. Equally interesting are the unclimbed icy northwestern faces of Menthosa (6,443m), Baihali Jot (6,290m), and its satellites, the latter with elegant ice faces above the Saichu Valley. No less intriguing is the south face of Shiva Shankar, though it has a disturbing array of seracs that get the sun most of the day. East of our base camp lay the confusingly named Baheli Jot (5,600m), a miniature Everest. The southwest ridge would provide good acclimatization and an interesting exploratory climb. Most of the history of climbing in the Pangri region is yet to be written.

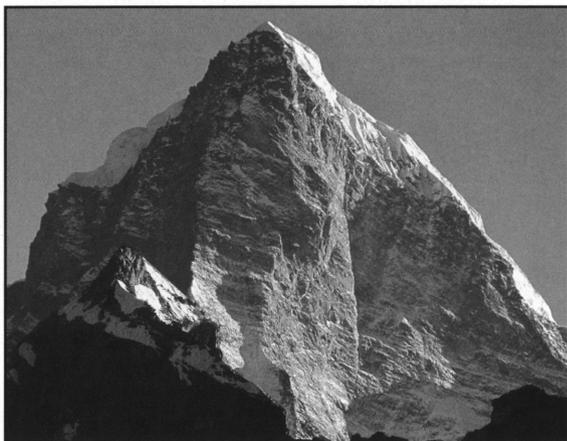
BRUNO MORETTI, *CAI, Italy*



Unclimbed northwest face of Menthosa. *Bruno Moretti*



East face of unclimbed Peak 5,860m, seen from rock band on west buttress of Shiva Shankar West. *Bruno Moretti*



Spectacular upper east ridge of Shiva. However, unlike nearby Miyar Valley, most rock in the Pangri is very poor. *Bruno Moretti*