

up to the top ridgeline leading to the summit. At 1:10 p.m., they reached the summit after a long and arduous climb. On August 16, the second ascent team, Yoshitsugu Deriha, Taku Kojima, and Hidetaka Saruhashi reached the summit. The weather was changing for the worse and we decided to be satisfied with six climbers in our party gain the top of the peak.

We cleared the second camp in a snowstorm. On August 19, when we got back to the base camp it was covered with thick fresh snow. On August 20 we cleared base camp and began moving down the mountain in heavy snowfall.

Yuka, our climbing leader on this expedition, was the first woman ever to lead a student mountaineering party of Tokai University. She led the entire route. It was an impressive and praiseworthy achievement for a student mountaineering party to reach the summit of an unexplored peak in a greater range of Asia. The main peak of Kara Kunlun mountains had not been named yet, so we named it Dolkun Muztag (Wave of Mountains), whose origin comes from the combination of Dolkun (Wave) and Muztag (Mountain) in the Uighur language.

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Adapted from Japanese Alpine News, TAMOTSU NAKAMURA, Editor

QINGHAI-TIBET PLATEAU

Qiajajima I (5,930m), first ascent. Qiajajima massif is the highest mountain in the headwaters of the Mekong River on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau. It is located at about N33° 28' and E95° 11' in the most isolated region of the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. The massif has two peaks, Qiajajima I (5,930m) and Qiajajima II (5,890m), which are indicated on the topographical map 1:100,000 of the China People's Liberation Army. They remained unexplored because the region had long been closed to foreigners. In 1997 the first special permit was granted to a foreign party, the Niigata Mountaineering Association, for entering the unvisited area and attempting the untrodden peaks. The association sent an expedition and that year succeeded on Qiajajima II, but the highest peak, Qiajajima I, was not scaled due to unexpected frequent onsets of snow in spite of the summer season. In 2004 came another chance. I joined as deputy leader for an expedition to re-challenge Qiajajima I.

One microbus and two jeeps carried all the expedition members from Xining to Hot springs (336km), Yushu (510km) along the Qinghai-Sichuan Highway, then Zadoi (231km), Zaqeg-Zaigela campsite (76km) in five days from July 15 to 20. There we employed six muleteers and pack animals of 18 horses and eight yaks. On July 22 the caravan marched up 10km along the stream to a campsite at 4,444m. On July 23, heavy rainfall, strong wind and increase of river water made us stop. On July 24, we went up 10km along the main stream. A large landslide blocked the trail before it entered a gorge. We were forced to set up Base Camp there at 4,690m. On July 25, as it was not possible to take advantages of yaks and horses from BC, loads were ferried up by porters. The advance base camp (ABC) was built at 4,800m on the riverbank of the upper stream. The Chinese members and muleteers waited at BC until the climbing was over. On July 26 two members went ahead to pave the route. ABC-II was placed at 4,900m, and C1 was built at 5,140m, as ABC was too far away from the wall. Loads were carried to the higher camp. On July 27, C2 was set up at 5,360m at the foot of the wall.

On July 29 an advance party of three members commenced an assault on the summit. As there was no space to pitch a tent, they bivouacked at 5,587m. On July 30, they started climbing in the early morning. After ascending a chimney, they reached the main ridge, where they made a second bivouac at 5,780m. On July 31 the knife-edged main ridge became steeper. They detoured around the ridge to the north side and then reached the summit of Qiajajima I (5,930m) at 15:15. GPS indicated N33° 28' 33" and E95° 11' 33". The summiters were Shin-ichi Abe, Katsutoshi Suzuki, and Miho Kakinuma. On the way down they were again forced to bivouac, at about 5,600m on the wall, roped together. A fierce snowstorm bothered them all the night, dropping 20cm of snow. On August 11 everyone returned to Niigata via Xian.

Expedition members from the Niigata Mountaineering Association: leader: Shin-ichi Abe (57); deputy leaders: Ryoichi Matsuzaka (70), Katsutoshi Suzuki (60); members: Norihiro Asano (64), Shizuo Sugai (52), Tatsuko Anno (58), Miho Kakinuma (25), Yoko Abe (28). Expedition members from the China Qinghai Mountaineering Association: Liaison officer: Lei Wang; cook: Haixin An; driver: Haichou Shou, Teiho Jang; interpreter: Takahiro Kakiuchi (Japanese).

JAN editor's notes: There are three outstanding mountain massifs in the source of the Mekong River. They form a watershed between the main stream of the Mekong River and a large tributary of the upper Yangtze River (Chinese name is Tongtian He). From east to west: 1) Qiajajima and neighboring peaks. 2) Sedari (5,770m) and 5,700m–5,800m peaks ranging to the west, where glaciers are most developed. This massif remains unvisited. No photographs of the mountains have been taken. 3) A massif at the true source of the Mekong River, where some 5,500m peaks were already climbed by a party of the Tokyo University of Agriculture, Japan, in 1994.

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Adapted from Japanese Alpine News, TAMOTSU NAKAMURA, Editor

SICHUAN

CHOLA SHAN

Ganzi Tibetan Prefecture, Mt. Chola (6,148m), third ascent; correction to 1988 "Cheru" ascent and altitude. We made the third known successful ascent of Mt. Chola (Lat: 31° 48' 0", Long: 99° 7' 0") on July 22, 2003. Chola is located in western Sichuan province, Ganzi Tibetan Prefecture, Dege County, near the eastern Tibet border. Our team put the first Tibetan on the summit. It was also the second ascent by Chinese and Americans. The summiters were Yihua Ma, Terry Choi, Jin Zhu, Ying Liu, Ping Wang, and me.

We approached the mountain from Xinlu Lake. Our route followed the east glacier to camp 1 at 5,000m. We then followed a steep slope to the right of a sub-peak marked as 5,290m on our map. From our camp 2 at 5,450m (on a large snow plateau) we followed the north slope to the summit. The last 100-plus meters to the summit is along a ridgeline.

We believe we followed the same route as Charlie Fowler's alpine ascent in 1997. He listed Chola as 6,141m high (AAJ 1999, ppg. 210-213, and AAJ 1998, ppg. 353-357). We have listed it as 6,148m since that is what our GPS read at the summit. The latitude and longitude are