

remains almost unexplored. The summit of Tomurty is a table-top ice-snow plateau, with glaciers several kilometers long descending on all sides.

Takashi Kawakami of our alpine club first reached the area near the mountain in the summer of 1996, and a Chinese party made a reconnaissance in late 1996 and early 1997. A Japanese party from Niigata Prefecture made an attempt in 2000, but they made a mistake on the approach and ended up in a valley from which they were not able to reach any of Tomurty's glaciers.

In the summer of 2004 one of our club members, Koichiro Takahashi, reconnoitered a possible climbing route, finding a way into the Kazantapute valley and a suitable line onto the glacier flowing southwest from the main summit.

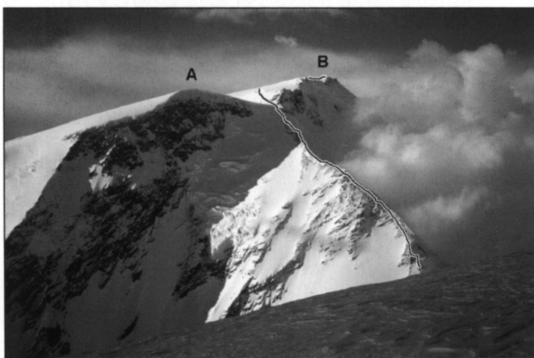
Our 2005 expedition comprised I, Isao Fukura (57) as leader, Hiroyuki Katsuki, (25) and Koichiro Takahashi (43), plus a liaison officer, interpreter, and cook from the China Xinjiang Mountaineering Association. We arrived in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang, on August 7 and the following day reached the village of Badashi (1,800m) by road.

We reached base camp at 3,800m on the 9th, with the help of camels and mules. Over the next few days we ferried loads up the glacier and established Camp 1 (4,200m) on the 12th. On the 15th, after a reconnaissance the previous day, Katsuki and Takahashi left this camp at 7 a.m. in fine weather with a light wind and a temperature of -9°C. A crevassed glacier led to a 50° snow/ice face and eventually the summit, which they reached at 3:40 p.m. A GPS reading indicated an altitude of 4,892m. They returned safely to base camp the following day

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KUN LUN

Muztagh Ata (7,546m), south ridge. On August 24 Valery Shamalo and I from St. Petersburg reached the main summit of Muztagh Ata via the south ridge. As we were well acclimatized after our ascent of Koskulak and had previous experience on the Kalaxong Glacier, we were able to reach the 6,100m col between Koskulak and Kalaxong in one day from the standard Muztagh Ata base camp. We made our first camp on this col at the head of the Kalaxong Glacier. The next day we climbed the ridge above to ca. 6,800m for our second night and by the following night had reached 7,200m, just below the saddle between Kalaxong and the main summit. The route had involved snow climbing almost throughout, though at two points we climbed rocky sections, as it appeared easier to progress on rock than break trail through difficult snow. Next day we reached the summit of Muztagh Ata, our biggest problem being cold temperatures and a strong wind, giving the feeling that autumn



The south ridge of Muztagh Ata (B; 7,546m), seen from the summit plateau of Koskuluk at c7,000m. The route of the first ascent by the St. Petersburg team is marked. On the second ascent, less than two weeks later, a Russian party also climbed Kalaxong (A; 7,277m). *Alexey Gorbatenkov*

was upon us. From the summit we descended the old Classic (1956) Route. Visibility was far from perfect, but the trail was well marked with red flags and easy to follow.

We passed below Kalaxong (7,277m; sometimes referred to as Muztagh Ata South), but on September 4 three members of another expedition, Dmitry Chijik, Vladimir Kagan, and Petr Yudin from a large Russian expedition led by Andrey Lebedev, repeated our route and also climbed Kalaxong.

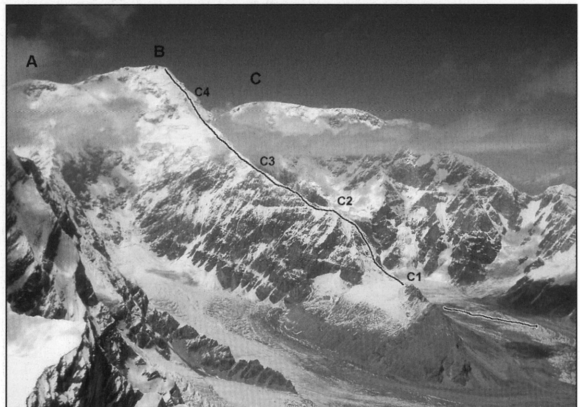
ALEXEY GORBATENKOV, *Mountainguides.ru*, Russia

Editor's Note: The Lebedev expedition made the first ascent of Kalaxong via the South Ridge. The summit can be reached by an easy detour from the Original Route up Muztagh Ata, a route that is rarely followed today (climbed by the Sino-Russian expedition of 1956 but nearly completed in 1947 by Shipton and Tilman). In the early 1980s the Chinese moved Muztagh Ata base camp some distance further north and opened a new and more direct line to the summit, which has since become the established Normal Route. Who made the first ascent of Kalaxong is unclear, though it may well have been Shipton and Tilman. In more recent times there are unconfirmed reports of a Chinese ascent in 2000, when the team became badly lost on the descent.

Muztagh Ata, second ascent of southeast ridge, alpine style. In order to be well-acclimatized for their alpine-style attempt on Shivering during the autumn, 26-year-old Kazuya Hiraide and 33-year-old Kei Taniguchi climbed Muztagh Ata (7,546m), making the second ascent of the southeast ridge. This elegant line above the so-called Potterfield Glacier was first climbed in July 2000 by Americans Walter Keller, Dan Mazur, and Jon Otto in an eight-day alpine-style push, after they had first climbed the Normal Route. Hiraide and Tanaguchi initially acclimatized on the Normal Route (west flank) and then reached base camp at 3,900m on August 29. They established an advanced base camp at 4,500m on the 31st and then four high camps on the ridge as the two made their alpine-style push: Camp 1 at 5,400m on September 1, Camp 2 at 5,850m, Camp 3 at 6,450m, and Camp 4 at 7,200m. On September 5 the pair reached the summit at 3:30 p.m. They descended the Normal Route, on the far side of the mountain, as far as 6,800m (usual site of Camp 3). On the 6th they reached the standard west-side base camp. Hiraide had carried skis up the southeast ridge and was able to use them to descend the west flank.

The two then crossed the Kunjerab Pass into Pakistan and made their way to the Indian border at Wagah, eventually reaching Delhi on September 19 and starting the second phase of their expedition.

KAZUYA HIRAIDE, *Japan*



The northern part of the Muztagh Ata Massif rising above the Kuksay Glacier. (A) Kalaxong (7,277m), (B) Muztagh Ata (7,546m), (C) Kuksay (Mustagh Ata North Peak; 7,184m). The line and camps of the Japanese alpine-style second ascent of the southeast ridge are marked: C1 (5,400m), C2 (5,850m), C3 (6,450m), C4 (7,200m). Kazuya Hiraide collection