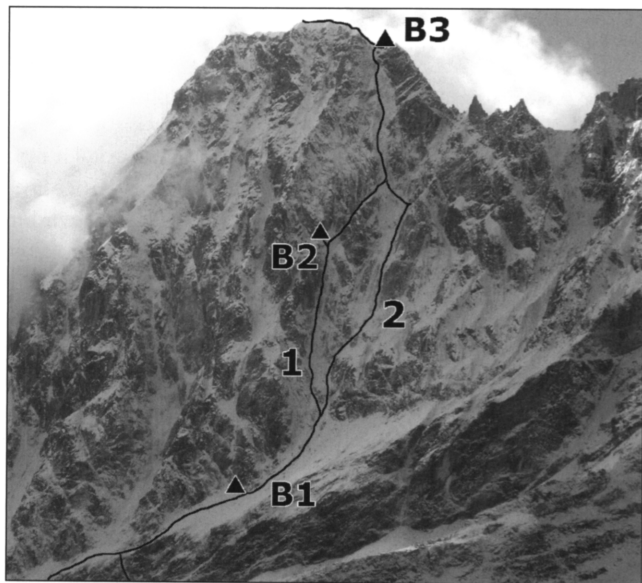


p.m. Kammerlander, who after the ascent called it the most difficult of his career, felt the climbing on the ridge to be of the same order as the north face of the Eiger but at a much higher altitude. This was the first of Unterkircher's two notable ascents in 2007. He later made the first north-to-south traverse of Gasherbrum II (see Climbs and Expeditions, Pakistan), climbing a new route on the Chinese face.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*,
www.climbmagazine.com, and www.kammerlander.com

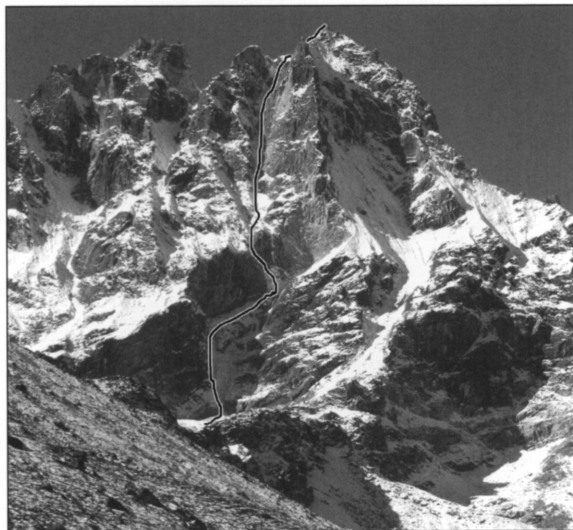
Phari Lapcha, second ascent of north face, Japanese variant to Bonfire of the Vanities. Fumitaka Ichimura and I climbed the north face of Phari Lapcha (6,017m). In the lower section we followed new ground but traversed to the original French route for the upper part of the face. We graded our 1,000m, 24-pitch line ED1 AI4 R. We left Gokyo village on November 22, climbed onto the snow band that traverses the bottom of the face just above its base, moved right, and bivouacked below the start of our line. Next day we climbed the narrow gully above. The terrain was mostly hard snow, so placing ice screws proved impossible. At times the rock was loose. By evening we had reached a small icefield, where we enjoyed a sitting bivouac on a small ledge. On the third day we hoped to climb directly toward the summit, but the ice turned out to be thin, so we slanted up right on an obvious ramp and joined the French route. [The French route, which represented the only prior ascent of the north face, was put up in November 2003 by Seb Constant and Jérôme Mercader at ED1 M5 WI4. Named Bonfire of the Vanities, they climbed the route in 27 pitches, with one bivouac at 5,670m and a second at the exit point on the summit ridge at 5,970m. The Japanese reached the French line just above the site of the first French bivouac—Ed.] We continued up the French route, reaching the summit ridge after dark, where we bivouacked on a good ledge beneath a rock pinnacle. On our fourth day we continued up sugar snow to the spectacular summit and descended to the southwest. Because snow and ice were so thin, we could not go down the gully that forms the easiest ascent route on this side of the mountain; it was too loose and dangerous. [The first official ascent via this gully and the upper northwest ridge took place in spring 2003 by a 10-member multinational team including a group of



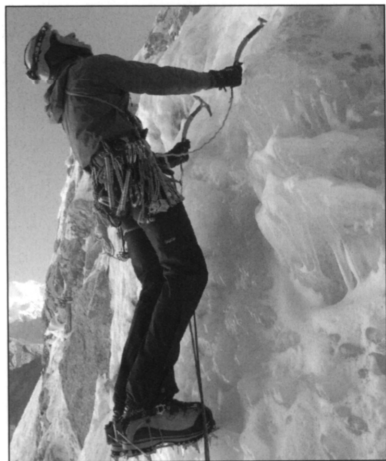
The north face of Phari Lapcha (6,017m). (1) The Ichimura-Nakagawa variant (ED1 AI4 R) to (2) Bonfire of the Vanities (ED1 M5 WI4, 1,000m, 27 pitches, Constant-Mercader, 2003). The three Japanese bivouacs are marked and both parties reached the main summit. *Hiroyuki Nakagawa*

Sherpas—Ed.] Instead we descended the French route [The Bridge of Lost Desire, climbed in November 2003 by Constant and Mercador to give a 350m line at WI3 and M4—Ed.], reached the glacier in the evening, and continued down to bivouac for a fourth time. On the 26th we walked down to Machermo village.

HIROYUKI NAKAGAWA, *North Japan Climbing Team*



The northeast face of Dawa Peak (5,920m) showing the line of Snotty's Gully (700m, WI5 M5+, Bracey-Bullock, 2006), repeated in 2007 by Dannevig and Nielsen. This peak was named by the owner of the Machermo Lodge after his daughter. The main north face of Phari Lapcha lies just to the left. Halvor Dannevig



Nils Nielsen on the crux pitch of Snotty's Gully, northeast face of Dawa Peak. Halvor Dannevig

Dawa Peak, Snotty's Gully, second ascent; Phari Lapcha, The End of the Beginning, first ascent. Halvor Dannevig and I traveled to the upper Khumbu, hoping to find interesting climbing on "not too high" peaks. We consider how we do it to be more important than what peak we climb, so for us snow-plodding up fixed ropes on famous peaks is not interesting. As I was a Himalayan novice, the peaks around Gokyo seemed a perfect start to my Himalayan climbing. Our main objective was an unclimbed line on the north face of Phari Lapcha (6,017m).

Staying at the Gokyo Resort Lodge, we had a perfect view across the lake to the north face. The more we looked through binoculars, the more we realized

that it was not ice, but snow, that was plastered to the face. For acclimatization we tried to climb a new line on the unnamed 5,906m peak between Dawa Peak (5,920m) and the Renja Pass. Standing in a cave underneath a thin ice curtain, after climbing 200m of powder snow and really bad ice, we were not optimistic. I continued, and in half an hour managed 15m of snow-covered M5. With no protection in sight above and no ice, I rappelled and found myself two meters outside the cave.

The only place we saw ice on the north side of the Phari Lapcha massif was in Snotty's Gully (WI5 M5+, ca 700m but 1,000m of climbing), a line climbed by the accomplished British alpinists Jon Bracey and Nick Bullock in 2006. With so many unclimbed lines around, it didn't feel right walking to