



Broad summit ridge of Yangmolang (6,066m) from northeast. Highest point is right of center. *Dave Wynne-Jones*

the earlier visit. Perhaps the 2008 disturbances, which resulted in a police house being burned down in a neighboring valley, had some influence. However, there seemed to be only two observable material changes: the illegal logging of virgin forest, which started in 2007, had been shut down by the government, although a new road and electricity pylons had been built to the village as compensation. And during 2007 there had not been a single monk or nun in

evidence in the valley, while in 2009 there was a significant presence. No one on the team has any inclination to return. We wish to acknowledge the support given by the Mount Everest Foundation.

DAVE WYNNE-JONES, *Alpine Club*

Yangmolang (6,066m), south face attempt; Dangchezhengla (5,830m), south glacier to southeast face to northeast ridge. Our original plan was to approach Yangmolang from Sanglongxi (pronounced *song-lung-see*, a.k.a. Sanchu) Valley and climb from the east. We arrived in the valley on October 17 and spent the night in the lower village, which has a population of ca 300. The following morning the village secretary took us to a community meeting. The result of our 30-minute "talks": "You are not allowed to climb Yangmolang." Our stand-in liaison officer, Chen Li, with Zhang Jian, had a private meeting with village officials, which proved even worse. We were told to leave the valley that day or the villagers could not guarantee our safety. Climbing the mountain brings about ominous events such as bad weather, sickness, and natural disasters. Reasoning with superstitions is impossible.



Summit area of Dangchezhengla. Northeast ridge forms right skyline. (1) Ascent route taken by American-Chinese team. (2) Descent route. Top of high camp tent in lower right. *Jon Otto*

We had two options. One was to delay our climb, return to Chengdu, and work through official channels to negotiate access to Sanglongxi Valley, the other was to approach the mountain from Zhongba Valley to the south. We knew the south face of Yangmolong might not offer a feasible line to the summit, but returning to Chengdu would have wasted a lot of money and resources. Approaching from the south seemed worth the risk.

On the 19th we established base camp at 4,700m in the Zhongba Valley, by the northern shores of Lake Yangmogen (pronounced *jong-more-gen*). Here people were friendly, and we were easily able to hire horses. The head lama of a monastery told us that many of the surrounding peaks were sacred, but that nobody felt they should be banned to climbers. After a reconnaissance Tim Boelter, Kang Hua, Lao Wang, Su Rongqin, Yao Zhen, and I set up advanced base at 5,065m on a moraine directly below the south face.

A 600-700m wall of rock, snow, and ice stood between us and the summit. A huge serac stretched across the entire face at mid-height, and the summit ridge had suspicious-looking cornices overhanging our route. On the morning of the 23rd, Tim, Kang Hua, Su Rongqin, and I started up the face. I tried not to notice that large parts had recently calved off and were lying in rubble at its base. I was in front, when a rock exploded 50m above. I quickly took cover but 20 minutes later saw a rock twice the size of a fist shoot down our route. The sun had hit the upper section of the south face, and the cliff 400m above us was coming apart. Disappointed, we descended, knowing that this route was unsafe.

Back on the glacier, we looked at another line, a thin couloir in the center of the face. Su Rongqin and I climbed the 45° cone flowing from the fissure, and I then led an almost vertical section of mixed rock and ice. This was followed by a long 30° snow couloir and a pitch of hollow WI3, running with water. It was getting late so we rappelled.

Next morning four of us jumared back up and continued climbing, but a chunk of ice hit Tim hard on the hand, and a few minutes later ice and rock flew past. The ice above was thin and melting fast. Further climbing was too risky. We retreated from 5,400m dejected, noticing that our first abandoned line was now a waterfall. We had done our best.

Next morning, the 25th, Tim, Su Rongqin, and I walked around to the central glacier leading to the col between Dangchezhengla and Makara (Yangmolong central peak, 6,033m).



Su Rongqin (left) and Jon Otto on summit of Dangchezhengla. Behind lie Makara and then Yangmolong. *Tim Boelter*



Tim Boelter on final section of Dangchezhengla northeast ridge. *Jon Otto*

It was full of crevasses, but they were obvious. We eventually reached a 100m wall of 70° ice, which we climbed to a flat spot at 5,554m, just below the Dangchezhengla-Makara col (5,565m). We camped there for the night.

Next morning we made a long traverse west below the northeast ridge, before climbing 70° snow and ice for 150-200m directly up the southeast face to reach the final section of ridge. We followed this to the summit, the steepest part at 80°. From the top we had a fabulous view of Yangmolong's upper ridge, which looked more challenging than we had imagined. We could also see Everest on the horizon and Namche Barwa to the west. We were the third team to summit this peak and Su Rongjin the first Chinese. We also believe we made a new variant. [In 2002 Japanese reached the Dangchezhengla-Makara col directly and then climbed the right side of the northeast ridge on very steep ice, 11 pitches from col to summit.] We made five 60m rappels directly down the southeast face, regained our traverse line, and followed it back to camp. Continuing down, we made it to base camp at midnight.

JON OTTO, AAC

Editor's note: A history of attempts and ascents in this small massif appears in AAJ 2008, p. 422. However, corrections are necessary. Makara is now reported to have been climbed from the south by Koreans in 2003, likely during an attempt to reach Yangmolong. It was attempted again in March 2007 by a Chinese team (which did not attempt Dangchezhengla, as stated), also likely as part of an attempt on Yangmolong. This attempt was not only unsuccessful but resulted in the death of one of China's most gifted climbers, Liu Xinan. There is now a memorial to him at Yangmolong Lake.

DAXUE SHAN

MINYA KONKA RANGE

Peak ca 6,000m, southwest face, attempt; Jiazi (6,540m), west face, not to summit. In 2008, during an expedition to the Minya Konka Range (AAJ 2009, pp 350-352), Sébastien Moatti and I climbed a nameless summit of 5,200m in the Tshiburongi Valley north of Riuchi Gongga. While making this ascent, I noticed a towering granite wall rising from just beyond the base of the Tshiburongi Glacier. With its image burned into my mind, I returned in 2009 to tackle it with French guides Pierre Labbre, Rémi Sfilio, and Baptiste Rostaing-Puissant.

We established camp on October 3 at the foot of the Tshiburongi moraine. This would be our base for



1,600m west face of Jiazi. (1) Northwest ridge, attempted in 1981 by a British Army expedition that reached 6,100m. (2) West face couloir, climbed to summit ridge in 1982 by Americans Stutzman and Williams. A cornice collapse and dropped sack forced them to abandon the summit and descend east face. (3) 2009 French line, which reached a high point (H) on south ridge: (B) marks bivouac. (4) 2008 French attempt. High point was bivouac at 5,400m, reached after 600m of climbing. (5) South ridge followed by 1982 Americans to make first and only ascent of mountain. *Pascal Trividal*