

where we spent two hours chopping out an exposed perch for the tent. After 12 hours climbing we had to spend the night wearing harnesses.

Igor led the first part of the second rock barrier (M4), I led a weakness through the overhanging section (M5+), and Ales continued on mixed terrain and deep snow. The angle eased, and we progressed faster, stopping for the night below the last mixed section on the ridge. The stove failed, leaving us only half a day's supply of water.



Downclimbing beneath serac barrier on southeast face of Xuelian Northeast. *Peter Juvan*

We started early the following day, bypassing the final rock section on the left, and reached the summit from the east at 1:20 p.m., after six hours' climbing. We started down the unseen southeast face, already covered in mist. We moved together, using ice screw protection. At one point Ales lost a crampon on a 60° slope, but it stopped rolling after 50m. The cloud concealed a huge band of seracs, which we only noticed when we were well below it. In three hours we reached a plateau and were out of its range. We'd been on the go for 14 hours and were exhausted and dehydrated but were in a safe spot.

On our fifth day, again shrouded by mist and guided only by intuition, we rappelled over a serac, made a long traverse east, rappelled again, and finally reached a small but welcome stream on a 60° ice slope. At 4 p.m. we reached the glacier, covered with 30 cm of fresh snow. We embraced, and Ales cried. The 2,000m descent, on which we made only three rappels, involved difficulties of AI3, 60-80°. On the way back to advanced base, we took numerous falls into crevasses, though none deeper than our shoulders.

We called the route *Arête of Trust* (2,400m, ED2 AI5 M5+), as a tribute to a friend, Andrej Magajne, who had often visited the Kyrgyzstan Tien Shan and was killed the previous spring, skiing in Slovenia.

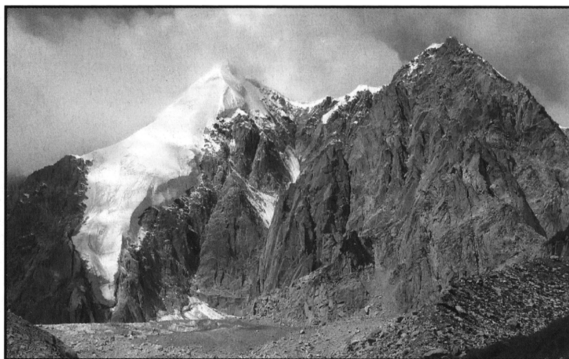
PETER JUWAN, *Slovenia*

Editor's note: Xuelian Northeast was the remaining virgin 6,000m summit of the main Xuelian Group. Its west ridge had been attempted in 2009, by Jed Brown and Bruce Normand, who retreated at 5,400m (AAJ 2010). The Slovenian ascent was one of six nominations for the 2012 Piolets d'Or

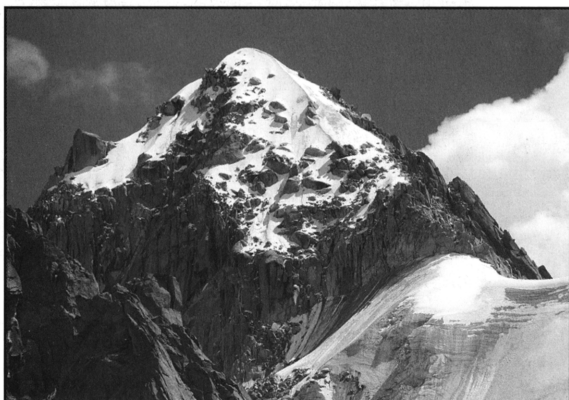
SICHUAN

CHOLA SHAN

Sejong reconnaissance. Before our attempt on Goromity (as reported elsewhere in this section), Hitoshi Onodera and I traveled to Kangding, en route to the Gongkala Shan, where we had a permit from the Sichuan Mountaineering Association for Kwarani (I, 5,992m; II 5,928m). However, the Deputy Director of the Sports Administrative Department, a senior official in the Ganzi Tibet Autonomous Region, refused to let us continue, stating that Kwarani was holy to Tibetans. The same problem was



Unclimbed Sejong I (left) and Nobuyugya from northeast. *Takao Ohe, supplied by Tamotsu Nakamura*

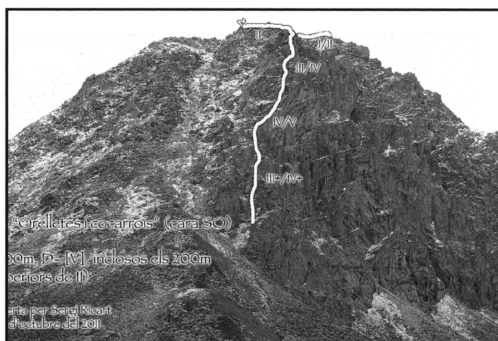


Unclimbed Sejong II from northwest. *Takao Ohe, supplied by Tamotsu Nakamura*

met by British expeditions in 2005 and 2007. We moved to the northern end of the Chola Shan, where we had information that there was an unclimbed massif called Polujab, south of Zhogchen Monastery. (A preliminary reconnaissance of these mountains had been made in 2000 by Tom Nakamura, who spent three days at the monastery.) Onodera and two companions explored from the east, while another two companions and I approached from the west. Locals explained that the highest peak was named Sejong. We took photos of peaks in this massif for future attempts, concluding that the highest is Sejong I (5,816+m, not marked on the Chinese map), the second highest Sejong II (5,816m, southwest of Sejong I and marked on the map), the third highest Nobuyugya (5,594m, north of Sejong I, also marked on map), and the fourth Polujab (5,472m, west of Sejong II, marked on Chinese map).

*TAKAO OHE, Japan, supplied by
Tamotsu Nakamura*

SHALULI SHAN



Acha La Ri from southwest, showing Orelletes i Cocarrois. *Sergi Ricart*

Shaluli Shan and Daxue Shan, various ascents. For three months I traveled alone in Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan, near the Tibet border, spending time with local inhabitants and exploring unclimbed mountains and little visited valleys.

I first visited Shaluli Shan North. On the north side of the Sichuan-Tibet Highway, east of the Chola Shan Pass (Tro La, 4,910m), and directly north of the Chola Shan, is a small cirque of peaks. On October 1st I walked into the cirque, placed camp at 4,500m, and reached the