

TAMOTSU (TOM) NAKAMURA

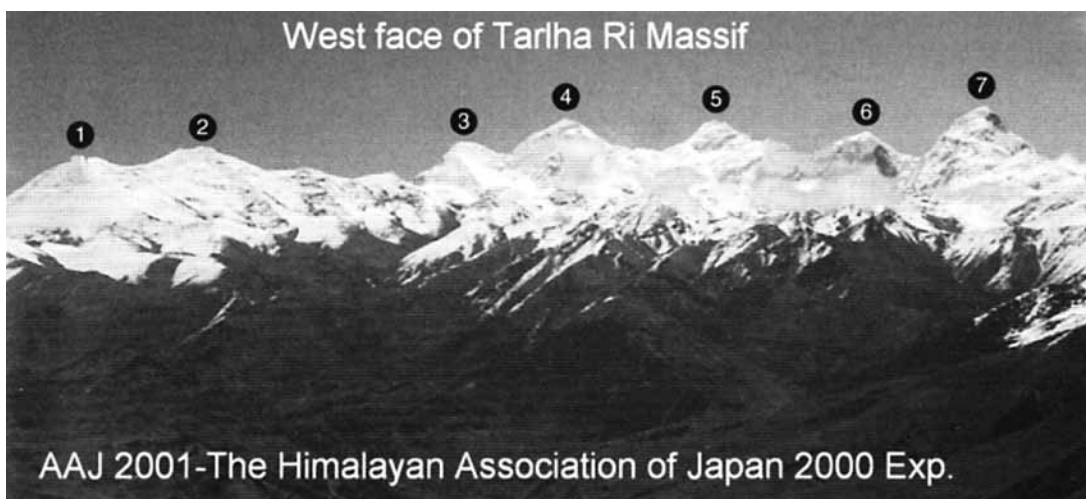
## South Tibet Borderlands – Shannan – Autumn 2013

Only one day ‘blue sky’ expedition & less-frequented region

Restrictions and controls over foreigners for entering unopened areas of east and southeast Tibet have been being harder and harder since 2008, the year of Beijing Olympic and uprisings by Tibetan having taking place in Lhasa. I came back to the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) after two years and felt that inspection for the foreigners had been severer right from the Lhasa Airport exit. Even knowing of the sensitive situation, the elderly explorers, Tsuyoshi Nagai and I planned to visit a restricted region south of the Yarlung Tsanpo in Shannan (south of mountains), the land of the cradle of Tibetan culture:

### 1. Eastern side of Tarlha Ri 6,777 m massif and Xoijian Qeri massif:

The western side of the massif of Tarlha Ri was reconnoitered and attempted by a team of the Himalayan Association of Japan in 2001 (See a panorama view on the AAJ 2001 as below). They made the first ascent of ①*Zhemazhenyon* 6,480 m, but the eastern side remains unexplored.



Peaks of the Tarlha Ri group, showing 1. Mt. Zhemazhenyon (6,480 m). 2. Peak 6,578 m. 3. Peak 6,542 m. 4. Tarlha Ri (6,777 m). 5. Xialala Kang (6,682 m). 6. Peak 6,241 m. 7. Peak 6,410 m. Y. O<sub>TAR</sub>

### 2. Forbidden Tui Kangri ca. 7,000 m (Nyegi Kangsang) on the China-India border:

The plan was to approach to Tui Kangri as closely as possible. Current information on Kangto 7,060 m first climbed by the Doshisha University AC in 1988 is a matter of keen interest as there is no record of climbing and exploration later on. A summary of the Doshisha’s ascent appears hereinafter.

Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang) is known for a mistake by the India Army Expedition in 1995. They claimed the first ascent, but it was soon denied. (see picture of Julian Freeman-Attwood). A British climber of the Alpine Club, Freeman-Attwood made a reconnaissance in 2000, but he could not obtain a climbing permit in 2001. So he resigned the attempt and since then the mountain has been closed to

foreign expeditions from Tibetan side. Mountains range of Tui Kangri – Kangto and peaks of the vicinity along the China (south Tibet)–India border inhabits some 30 unclimbed 6,000 m peaks. In the other hand, Gori Chen group SWW of Kangto in the Assam Himalaya (Indian side) is today most frequented and easily accessible. Gori Chen 6,488 m (height is still in dispute) was first reconnoitered by William H. Tilman in 1939 and first climbed by an Indian Army expedition led by T. Harulu in 1966.

On October 26, we left Chengdu, and not staying Lhasa, we proceeded to Zetang 3,650 m by the main stream of Yarlung Tsanpo, the fourth largest town in the TAR, which was our base for explorations. We departed from Zetang on October 27. Awang, a most capable Tibetan guide accompanied us as ever. We discussed how to enter the deep south to reach lookout points to survey the mountains to explore. We followed Awang’s suggestions and advices about how to avoid check-posts of the Public Security Bureau and polices. Then we chose a byroad with no check-posts which went through west of fascinating Yalaxianbo 6,635 m, a most reputed mountain in south Tibet. This was first climbed by a Japanese party in 2007 from the eastern side (see pictures). The weather was perfectly fine and promised us Blue Sky.

In three hours from Zetang we crossed a high pass, Jiru La, at 5,130 m west of Yalaxianbo. The pass shares a watershed of the Yarlung Tsangpo and Subansiri. The River systems of south Tibet are much complicated. As the road descended, a breathtaking panorama of Tarhla Ri 6,777 m massif in the south west and Xojain Qeri 6,106 m massif in the west opened out before us beyond the blue Lake Chegu (4,600 m). As Tarhla Ri was still a bit far away from the lake, to our regret the highest peak could not be clearly indentified. Nevertheless, we could photograph the eastern side of several alluring 6,000 m peaks of the mountain massifs.

To my disappointment, however, I was suddenly attacked by serious high altitude sickness. Hands and legs became paralyzed and consciousness was lost for a couple of hours. There was a risk and danger of “Cerebral infarction (stroke)”. We decided to descend to Zetang as quickly as possible. I rested two days in Zetang but did not recover. The doctor of Tibet People’s Hospital in Lhasa advised me not to carry on the journey any more. Thus, the autumn plan ended as “Only one day blue sky expedition”. In this article, therefore, I publish and report the information relating to the areas of our autumn 2013 plan, as follows.

1. Projected route map and Google map
2. Pictures of beautiful Yalaxianbo 6,635 m
3. Panorama views of the northeastern side of Tarhla Ri and Xojain Qeri massifs and the northern side of peaks on China (Tibet)–Bhutan border
4. Pictures of Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang), Kangto and Gori Chen  
Harish Kapadia, Doshisha University and Julian Freeman-Attwood
5. Sketch map of Indian side drawn by Harish Kapadia
6. Russian topographical maps 1:200,000 to cover Xojain Qeri and Tarhla Ri massifs, peaks on China–Bhutan border and Gori Chen–Kangto–Chomo–Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang)
7. Summary of the first ascent of Kangto 1988 by Doshisha University AC

## Notes on heights of Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang), Kangto, Chomo & Gori Chen:-

Difflerent heights are shown on the Chinese Maps and the official Survey of India Maps. Therefore ca. 7,000 m applies to Tui Kangri on the route map.

	<u>Chinese maps</u>	<u>Survey of India</u>	<u>Doshisha Univ</u>
Kangto (Kanggardo 康格多)	7,060 m	7,042 m	7,055 m
Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang)	6,990 m & 7,012 m	6,983 m	6,990 m
Chomo I		6,878 m	
Chomo II		6,710 m	
Gori Chen		6,488 m	6,490 m

### Peaks on the McMahon Line

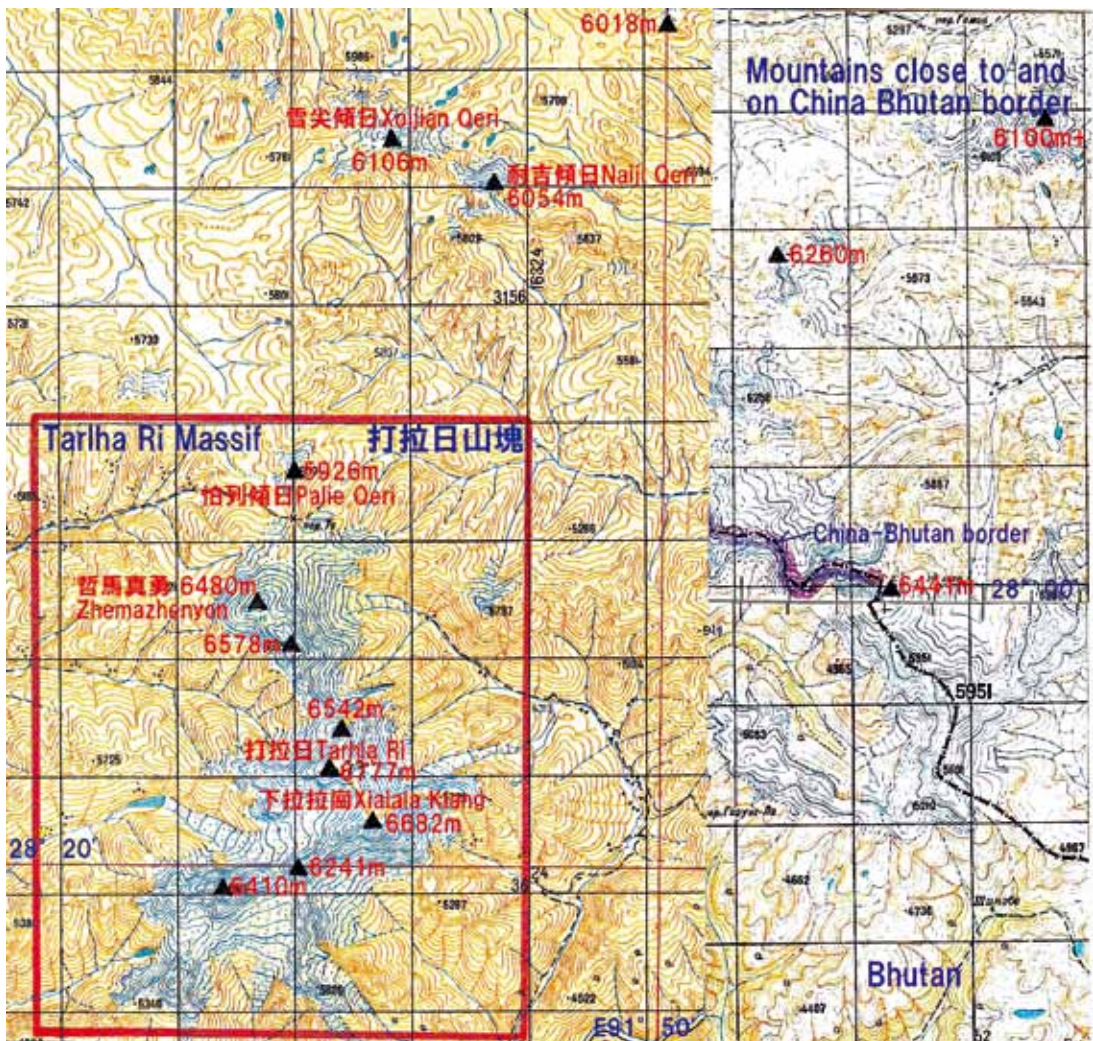
Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang)  
Chomo I & II  
Kangto (Kanggardo)  
Gori Chen

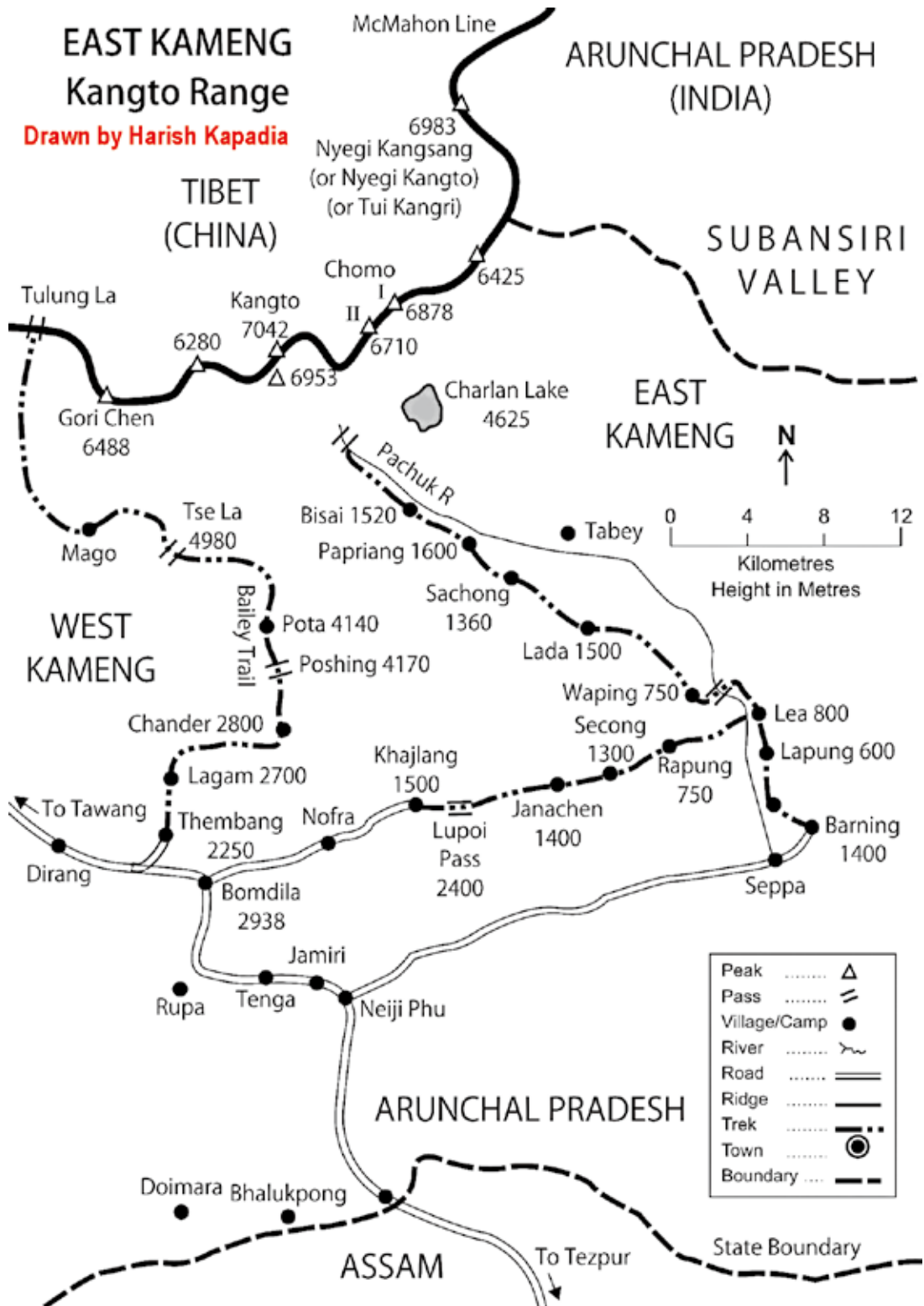






Historical Samye monastery, Zetang

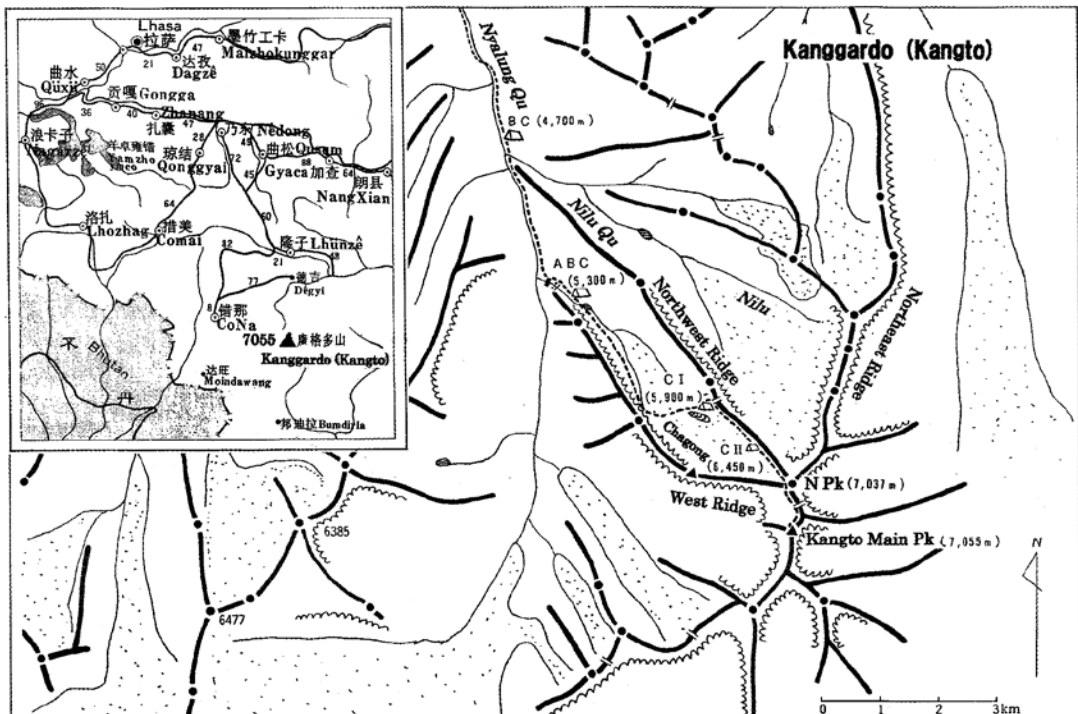




## Kanggardo (Kangto) 7,055 m – Himalaya (China 27°54'N-92°32'E)

1. Date of First Ascent: March 24, 1988
2. Climbing Route: Northwest ridge
3. Member of First Ascent: Takafumi Miyazaki (35), Kosuke Takano (23)
4. Expedition Team: Doshisha University Alpine Club, Leader Shinichi Naito (44) and 12 members with three HAP.
5. Camp Sites (Date): BC (4,700 m March 5), ABC (5,300 m March 8), C1(5,900 m March 15), C2 (6,450 m March 22)
6. Summary of Activities:

In 1913, a British and Indian expedition explored this region. In 1930, a British party attempted on climbing but it ended in failure. After more than a half century, Doshisha University AC made the first ascent. An access to this mountain is a drive for some 400 km from Lhasa down southward to Ziwu and then to a site for BC. On March 3, they started caravan from Kata after passing Zetangtown and Tsona village. On March 5, BC was established on the right bank of the Nyanglung River. They entered a glacier that flowed northwestward from the north peak. Climbing route was on the northwest ridge. They traversed the glacier at 5,600 m to climb the ridge. C2 was set up on the ridge two steps above the glacier. On March 24, Takano and Takasu departed C2 at 07:50 and 30 minutes later Miyazaki and Mase departed. A route to the summit was rather easy as a whole though there was a steep place partly. At about 6,850 m Mase and Takasu retired but Miyazaki and Takano first reached the north peak (7,037 m) and reached the main peak further 800 m away at 14:25. On March 26, other two members and a HAP also stood atop.





Yalaxianbo 6,635 m southeast face, Photo: Kenzo Okawa



Yalaxianbo north face



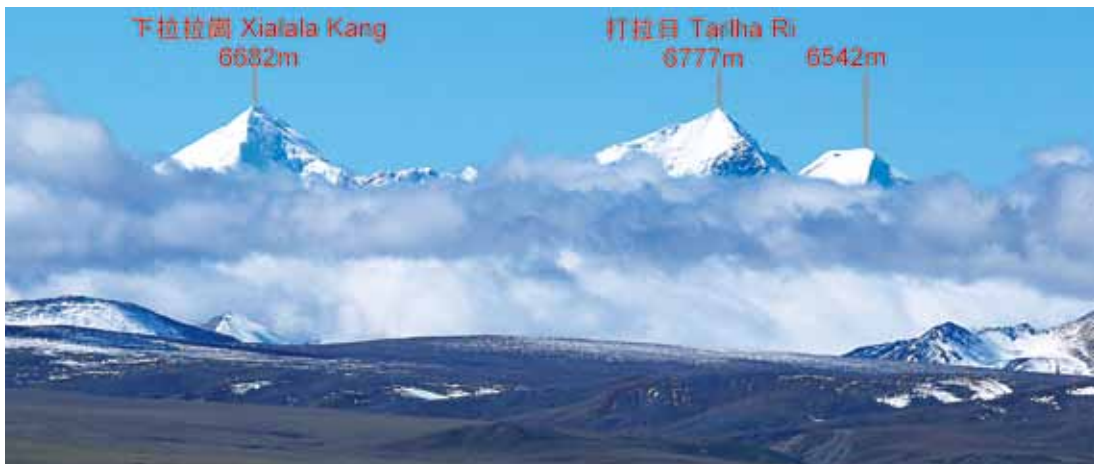
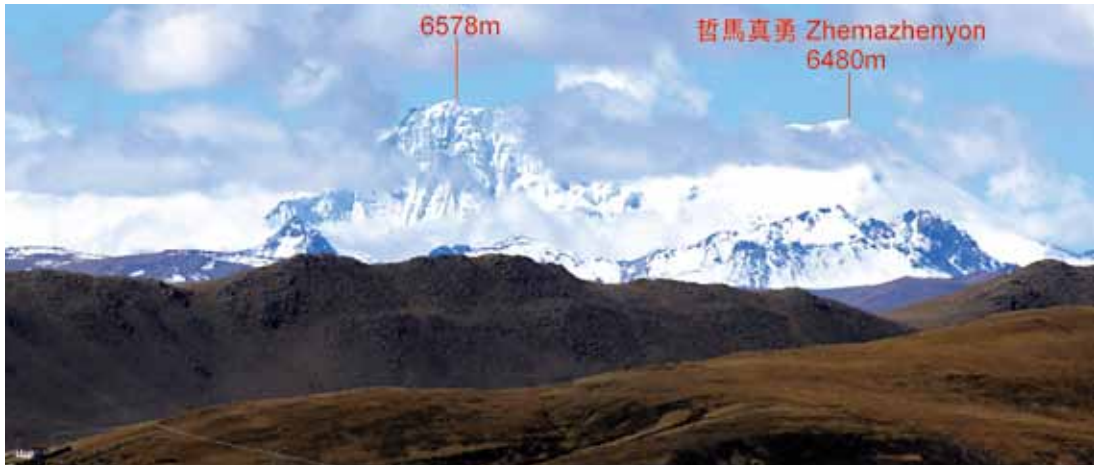
Yalaxianbo southeast face, Photo: Kenzo Okawa



Yalaxianbo west face, Photo: Tsuyoshi Nagai



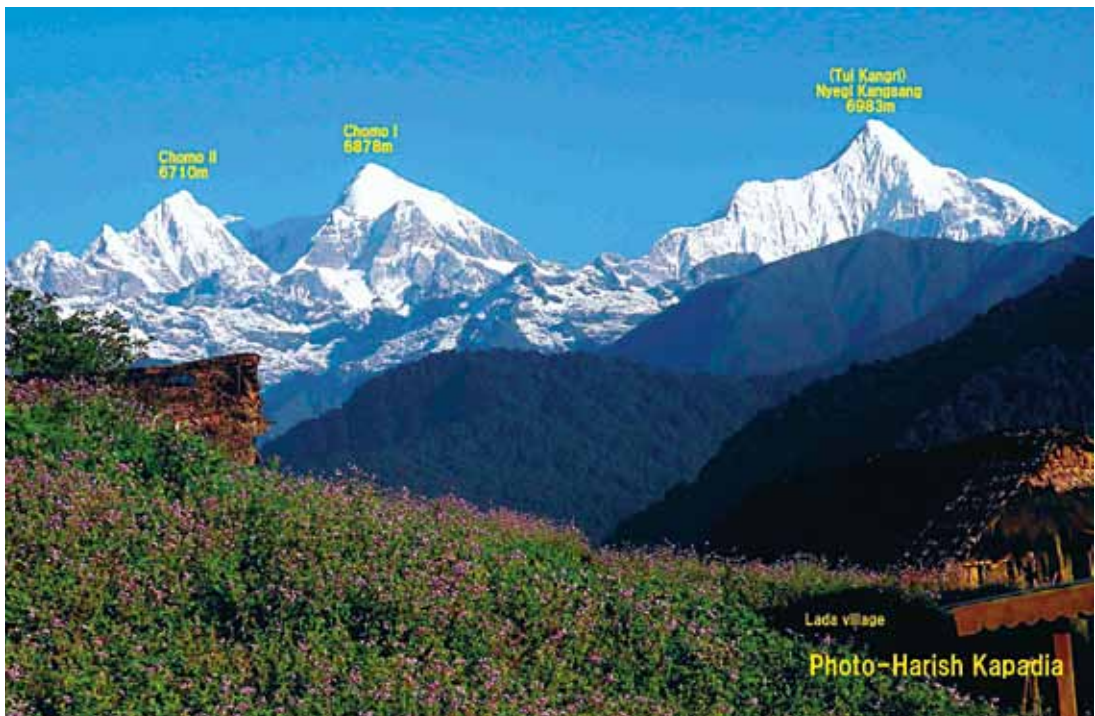




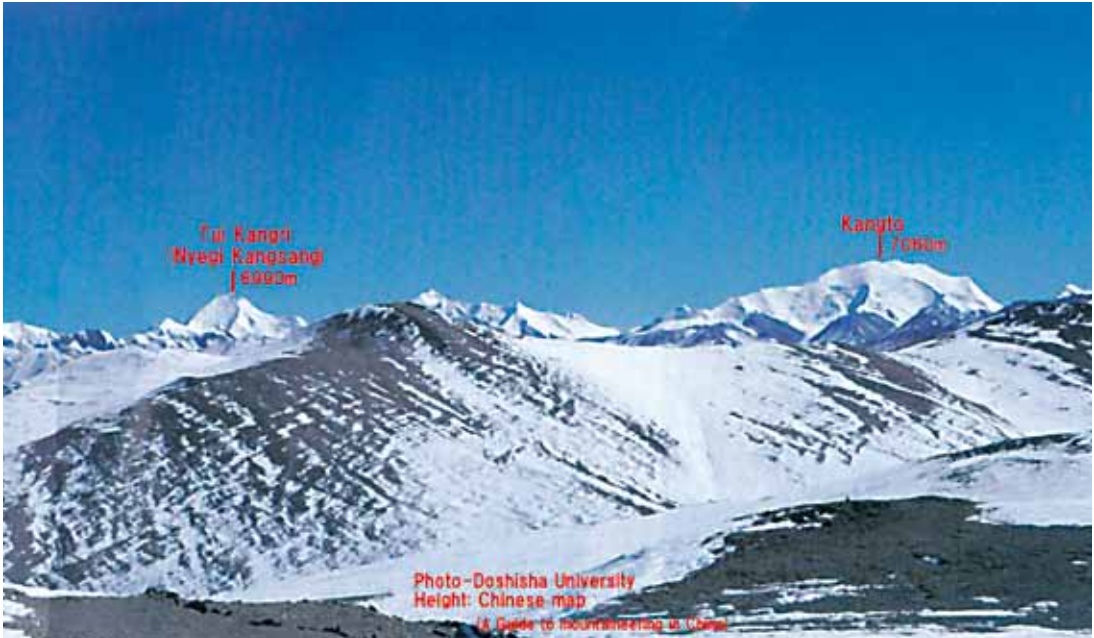




Gori CHen – Kangto, south face, Photo: Harish Kapadia



Chomo – Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang), south face, Photo: Harish Kapadia



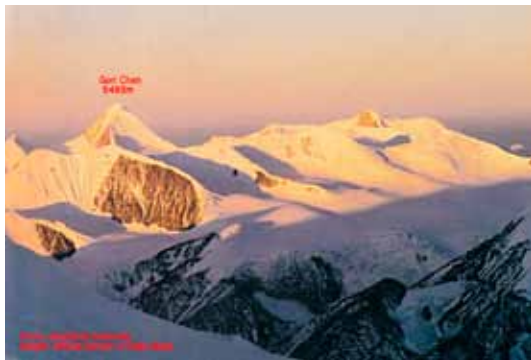
Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang) – Kanto, north face, Photo: Doshisha University AC



Kangto – Chomo – Tui Kangri (Nyegi Kangsang), south face, Photo: Koyasan University



Gori Chen, south face, Photo: Harish Kapadia



Gori Chen, northeast face, Photo: Doshisha University AC



Tui Kangri, north west face, Photo: Doshisha University AC

