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The Course Pursued by Doshisha University Alpine Club (D.A.C)

(A Brief History of Mountaineering and Explorations for 130 Years)

By Katsutoshi Hirabayashi

1. Introduction

This year, our Doshisha University celebrates 132 years anniversary since its establishment in 1875, when the founder Jose Hardy Neeshima (Joe Nijima) returned from the States where he had entered, though, having violated the nation's law to prohibit going abroad. He learned physical science and theological seminary over there, then, established Doshisha University which has eventually become the university with the longest history and tradition in Japan.

While he was in the States, Mr.Nijima by chance was asked to assist the Japanese Government Mission headed by Tomomi Iwakura, and Mr.Nijima traveled with the Mission to inspect both the States and European countries. Then, it drew Mr.Nijima's careful attention and interest while he was visiting Europe that the mountaineering and exploration activities had been flourishing particularly among young people, and vigorous actions were exhibited by young people. This idea and practice of mountaineering and exploration became a part of basic establishment philosophy of Doshisha, and the school especially encouraged its students to climb hills and mountains, thus, the culture of mountain climbing was generated among students of the school. Then, the field work, Sanka-Batsushioh exercise, literally meaning "to climb hills and cross the rivers" was gradually getting popular among the students. This could be comparable to an idea in Europe of "play ground of Europe" and this exercise finally became a tradition of Doshisha students. (1877 to 1890)

Under such culture, there had been brought up from Doshisha, Bunji Uruguchi (ref. note 1) (1872–1944) who climbed so many mountains in Japan with Walter Weston, a British missionary and Ekai Kawaguchi (ref. note 2) (1866-1944), a Buddhist priest and the author of Three years in Tibet, who entered there when that country had completely closed the door to the outside world.

The tradition of Doshisha to rove over hills and dales in the suburbs of Kyoto gradually began to give influences to students of other colleges and universities in Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe and Tokyo who began to climb mountains and their passion eventually caused them to organize their activities and name them as such, Travel Club, Alpine Ski Club, Alpine Club, etc., in each college and university.

Roughly 40 years after the germination days of “to climb hills and cross rivers“, the modern mountaineering which pioneers of natural history and university students had sought for, but, that is different from Western alpinism, started in Japan, which was an entire departure from mountain climbing exercises originated in early 8th century and carried on by old religious worshippers.

2. Activities of Yrs.1900 to 1950

With an introduction of art of ski to Doshisha in 1916, D.A.C started the mountain climbing with skis in winter. It was a cradle time of winter climbing. Around that time, competitions of exploring various climbing routes of mountains in Japan were much intensified among Japanese alpinists. By this time, in the mountain climbing scene in Japan, normal mountaineering was about to start, mainly supported by students, as well as by naturalists, literary men, photographers and others.

In 1932, a team with Kanji Kojima (ref. note 3) as a central figure, went to Northern Kuril islands and climbed mountains as well as conducted various research activities. They spent many hours especially in Chikura volcanic columns located in the south-western part of Paramushir Island.

In 1934, they climbed mountains in the northern part of Korea and then, after having ascended Mt.Paeku, made a grand traverse of surrounding mountains.

In 1935 and beyond, they made expeditions of the north-eastern mountain range of Sakhalin,(ref. note 4) while they made expeditions of the South Sea Islands including Java island as well as Taiwan.

3. Overseas expeditions including the Himalayas etc.

In 1960, DAC made the first ascent of Mt. Api (7,132 m) (ref.note 5), the highest peak of West Nepal on 10th May. Y. Tsuda, Leader and Katsutoshi Hirabayashi, Deputy Leader, the summit attainer and 3 others.

- * The feature of this expedition was that the team had obtained an official special permit from Indian Government to enter into the “ Inner Line “, so, the team, for the first time since World War II, could pass through Garhwal Himalaya
- * Mt. Gurla Mandhata (Mt. Naimona’ny 7,694 m), which they had once seen from the summit of Mt. Api was set as the next target for challenge and they achieved it twenty-five years later.
- * Since the expedition was made in the following year of an exile of Dalai Lama to India (on March 29, 1959), the team experienced most difficult time while they came across so many refugees who had crossed over the border between Tibet and India

In 1963, the second Himalayan expedition of DAC attained the first ascent of Mt. Saipal (7,040 m) (ref. note 6) on 21st October. Kanji Kojima, Leader and Katsutoshi Hirabayashi, Deputy Leader, the summit attainer and 4 others.

- * The feature of this expedition was that, since the team was unable to obtain a permit to pass through the “ Inner Line “ this time, they had to move up toward north through a deep forest of Terai of Kanchanpur, the most south-western end of West Nepal. It required 43 days to reach Saipal Glacier via villages of Silgarhi Bajang.
- * After having attained the summit of Mt. Saipal, the team was split into two, One party made a scientific expedition of a total distance of 600 km, moving around the northern side of Kanjiroba Himal and traveling along the upstream of the Langu river to Pokhara via Tolbol area, thus, traversed Nepal from west to east for the first time in the world. The other party made an expedition from Sija to Jumla, and, then, moved down south to Nepalganj via Dailekh. This expedition was highly evaluated in the world as an outstanding achievement.

In 1964, In a joint work with Science and Engineering Research Institute of Doshisha University, D.A.C implemented alpine activity and scientific

research of Alaska. Dr. Professor M.Nishihara, Leader and 7 others. Attained the summit of Mt.Balckburn (5,038 m) (ref. note 7) as the second ascent. (the first one was in 1958 by an international team)
Made the ascent of Mt. Regal (4,212 m) and also continued scientific research of glaciers and others.

In 1965, D.A.C made exploration and mountaineering activity in the Andes and Amazon (A-A project). (ref. note 8) They attained the summit of Mt. Salcantay (6,271 m), the highest peak of Cordillera Vilcabamba of Peru Andes on 21st June (the 3rd ascent). After that, they climbed Mt. Quishuar (5,775 m), followed by the ascents of Mt.Mellizos (5,310 m) and Nevados Blanco (5,250 m). In August, 8 people led by Y.Egami successfully went down the Vilcabamba river, the upper stream of the Amazon river, by rubber boat for a distance of 1,300 km taking one month. Yasushi Egami, Leader and S. Maeshiba, Deputy Leader and 8 others. A scientific research of the basin area of the Vilcabamba river by this expedition had resulted in many outstanding achievements.

During a period of 1966 to 1968, established “8000m Club“ within D.A.C to target at giant peaks of the Himalayas. A reconnaissance of Mt.Dhaulagiri was made from August to October 1967. S. Okada, Leader and 3 others.

In 1970, D.A.C made expedition of the main peak of Mt.Dhaulagiri (8,172m) (ref. note 9) and attained the summit on 20th October in the post monsoon season. The ascent was the second one in the world.

T. Ohta, Leader and 13 others. T.Kawata and a Sherpa reached the summit. In the past, high mountains with the summit altitude over 8000m had been challenged customarily by an organized national team, representing a country. In this respect, this was a remarkable challenge and success for the team being a private alpine club belonging to a private university.

In the same year, K.Hirabayashi, a member of D.A.C joined the Mt. Everest Climbing team organized and sponsored by the Japanese Alpine Club and successfully attained the summit of Mt. Everest on 12th May 1970.

In addition, Toshihiro Gotoh, joined the team to attack southern-east ridge of Mt.Makaru (8,481 m) (ref. note 10), which was organized by Tokai Section of the Japanese Alpine Club and could successfully open the route

right beneath the summit

In 1977, D.A.C succeeded in attaining the summit of Mt.Garumush (6,244m) (ref. note 10) of Hindu Raji mountains on 26th August. T.Matsumura, Leader and 3 young members. One of the young members, T. Miyazaki entered in Assam area and made a reconnaissance of Mt. Kangto (7,055m) and its ranges

By that time, D.A.C have decided to change targets for expeditions to China and the study started. The change was thus made by an expressed desire of the Chinese Government to accept mountaineering parties in the world.

In 1981, D.A.C made the first ascent of Mt.Siguniang Shan (6,250 m) (ref.note 11) of Szechwan Province on 28th, 29th and 30th July. T.Kawata,Leader and 7 others.

In 1985, Sino-Japanese Joint Friendship Expedition Team to Naimona'nyi made the first ascent of Mt. Naimona'nyi (7.694 m) (ref.note12) on 26th May. With K. Hirabayashi, as the Leader of a climbing team, a total of 13 people,Chinese and Japanese, attained the summit, meanwhile, the Expedition Team consisted of a total number of 55 including media people, reporters and scientific researchers. A complete research work was carried out for a total length of 2,000 km from Kashgar of Sinkiang Province to Tibet across the Kunlun ranges and ,after the ascent of Mt.Naimona'nyi, the research work was continued for another 2,000 km length along the Yarlung Zangbo river to Lhasa on the northern side of the Himalayas.
Executive Committee and Leader, A. Saito MD. K. Hirabayashi

In 1988, D.A.C made the first ascent of Mt.Kangto (7,055 m) (ref.note 14) of eastern Himalaya on 24th March. S.Naitoh, Leader and 18 others including media, reporters and researchers. It is located in the deepest point of east Tibet and is very difficult to climb. Since 1977, the plan had been progressed in parallel with Mr.T.Miyazaki's reconnaissance from Assam, India, situated in the southern side of the mountain.

In 1991, In a joint work with USSR Science Academy, D.A.C developed expedition and mountaineering activities in Kamchatka.

Attained the summit of Mt. Kilyuchevskaya (4,750 m) (ref.note 15) on 29th March.

Conducted the field investigation work of Kamchatka Peninsula and made geological and ecological research.

Y. Kawai, Leader and 28 others (of which 14 were USSR members).

It was the first expedition of Kamchatka since the World War Two. Very soon after this expedition, the nation of USSR collapsed and a new nation of Russia was born.

In 1997, D.A.C sent a reconnaissance party of 3 people to confirm an accurate location of Mt. Ronglai-Kangri (6,859 m) situated in the origin area of the Yarlung Zangbo river in September. Confirmed an approach route from Tibetan side.

In September 1998, D.A.C conducted a trial climbing of the north-eastern ridge of Mt.Ronglai-Knagri up to an altitude of 6,450m while exercising geological scientific research and other assignments. Y.Suita, Leader and 5 others including Professor T.Yokoyama, scientific research Leader

In 2002, following the outcome of two time investigations and surveys by the teams, D.A.C officially confirmed an existence of the highest summit of Ronglai-Kangri range and at the same time declared the official name of Mt. Kaqur-Kangri as local people had customarily been calling it and also the altitude of the summit. On 24th September, all of five members of the team headed by Toyoji Wada attained the summit. D.A.C confirmed an existence of a mountain called Ronglai-Kangri (6,799 m), 12 km north-west of Kaqur-Kangri. (as for details, please refer to “Japanese Alpine News Vol. 3 May 2003)

In 2004, D.A.C dispatch 3 members to and supported “West Tibet Academic Study and Mountaineering Team”, which was organized and implemented as part of commemorative business sponsored by the Japanese Alpine Club to celebrate its One Hundred Year Anniversary. Toyoji Wada performed as Leader of academic study team and Masahiro Shimizu as well as Atushi

Senda also joined. The climbing team succeeded in attaining the summit of Mt. Pachyung Ham (6,529 m) and Gang Dzong, a rock top (6,123 m) for the first time in the world. Academic study team successfully traced up footprints of a Japanese monk Ekai Kawaguchi, who secretly entered Tibet from Nepal in October 1900. (as for details, please refer to Japanese Alpine News Vol. 6, 2005.

In 2007, D.A.C again dispatched the mountaineering and scientific field research expedition to the source area of Yarlung Zangbo river and on 14th September it successfully attained the highest summit of Mt.Kubi Kangri (6,721 m) in Kubi Tsangpo area for the first time in the world.

The expedition team was organized by 6 students, 4 from Doshisha University, and one each from two other universities. Toyoji Wada as Leader and Atsushi Senda as sub leader joined them for training and education.

The scientific filed research this time studied the progress of global warming and adverse effects to glaciers, as well as the final survey of footprints of Ekai Kawaguchi. The research and survey have been satisfactorily completed . (The final report will be published in February 2008)

As above, aggressive activities of Doshisha University Alpine Club have been enhanced by positive build-ups of the first ascent of high peaks meanwhile keeping our untiring efforts to put our footmarks in a completely new frontier area.

We wish to be humble in mind and yet we are so proud that, since we have so far been favored with good luck and God's help, we never suffered from no serious injuries nor troubles in the overseas expeditions and each project has been accomplished with good success. We strongly trust that our good luck has owed much to our alpine philosophy and our superb traditions.

We will continue to play our role as a leader of mountaineering and exploration activities in Japan.

Katsutoshi Hirabayashi

Chairman Doshisha Univeersity Alpine Club

Ex. Vice Chairman, Japan Alpine Club

REFERENCE :

Note 1

Bunji Uraguch: (1872-1944) Graduated from the ordinary school of Doshisha in 1890. A scholar on English literature, Professor of Rikkyo University, a student of William Shakespeare and John Ruskin.
In 1894, as a friend of Walter Weston, broadly walked and climbed the Hida Mountains and assisted Mr. Weston to write and publish the book named "Mountaineering and Exploration of the Japan Alps".
In 1934, Delivered a lecture at Japan Alpine Club on the title of "In those days when I walked with Mr. Weston". (SANGAKU, the journal of the Japan Alpine Club, Vol. 29 No.3)

Note 2

Ekai Kawaguchi: (1866-1915) Entered Doshisha in 1886 at the age of 21 and learned English and Christianity and discipline his mind and body on the spirit of Sanka-Batsushioh. He was called Sadajiro Kawaguchi when studying at Doshisha ; thereafter, he studied at Toyo Tetugakukan school. Having returned to his home town, entered the Buddhist priesthood, then, traveled to India, and secretly entered into Tibet through Nepal. (entered into Tibet on 14th October 1900)
Wrote many books, including "Three years in Tibet" in 1909 Madras.

Note 3

Kanji Kojima : (1910-1979) A mountaineer and explorer representing Japan. Before the world war II, developed mountaineering practices and opened mountains on Northern Kuril islands, Saghalin, once belonging to Japan as well as mountains of Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. Was one of pioneers in this field.
Books, 1) Mountains of Taiwan, Azusa Shobo 1934

- 2) Tozan Rekitei (the course of mountaineering)
A collection of private documents from 1930 to 1963, published at his own expense
- 3) Leader of Expedition team to Saipal in 1963

Note 4

Sakhalin : North-east mountain range in Saghalin, expedition by students of Doshisha University Alpine Club.

Note 5

Mt.Api : Mountain of tragedy and good fortune, Yasushi Egami, Record of 1960, Meibunn-doh, published in 1961
JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol.LVI, 1961 pp4-6 in English
Pp63-93 in Japanese

Note 6

Ascent of Mt.Saipal: Record of Katsutoshi Hirabayashi in 1963, The Sankei Newspaper in 1964
JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol LIX 1964, pp1-3 in English
Pp 30-56 in Japanese

Note 7

Report of Science and Engineering Research Institute of Doshisha University, a Special Issue of “Scientific Research of Alaska” and the record in 1964:
JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol LIX 1965, pp 13-14 in English, pp 112–124 in Japanese

Note 8

Vilcabamba Mountain Group (Cordillira) and Vilcabamba River:
Record of Exploration and mountaineering Team of Doshisha University in the Andes and Amazon in 1965, and the record published in 1969
JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol LX 1965, pp13-14 in English and pp 112-124 in Japanese

Yearning for Mountains:

Shigeto Maeshiba, Rironsha, published in 1967

Exploration of the Andes and Amazon, Green Untrodden Area

and White Giant : Yasushi Egami, Shigeto Maeshiba, Kodansha, 1966

Note 9

Report of the Ascent of the main peak of Mt.Dhaulagiri :

Record of Mountaineering Team of Doshisha University
1970

JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol.LXVI 1971, pp 18-21 in
English and pp 79-91 in Japanese.

Note 10

Special Edition of Mt. Garumush:

Report of Doshisha Alpine Club Vol.No.21, 1977

Note 11

Mt.Siguniang Shan:

Report of Mt.Shiguniang Shan Mountaineering Team of
Doshisha University Alpine Club and record in 1981,
published in 1982

Note 12

Naimona'nyi :

Report of Sino-Japanese Joint Friendship Expedition
Team to Mt.Naimona'nyi,1988, published by the Mainichi
Newspaper in 1986, in Japanese, English and Chinese
respectively

Note 13

Scientific Symposium of Tibetan plateau:

Volume 1 & 2, 1988, the Organization Committee of
Sino-Japanese Joint Scientific Symposium

Note 14

Long-time Adored Peak :

Report of Mountaineering Team of Doshisha University
of Mt. Kangtoand record in 1988, published by the
Mainichi Newspaper in 1989

Note 15

The dawn of Kamchatka :

Report of USSR-Japan Joint Scientific Expedition and
Mountaineering Team of Doshisha University and record
of 1991

JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol 86, 1991, pp A31-A35 and
Pp 112-121 in Japanese

Note 16

Kaqr-Kangri : Report of Kaqr-Kangri Academic Study and
Mountaineering Team of Doshisha University Alpine
Club and the record of 2002
JAC Journal SANGAKU Vol 98, 2003 PP 115-128 in
Japanese

Note 17

Kubi Kangri : Report of Mountaineering and Scientific Field Research
Exposition Team to the Source Area of Yarlung Zangbo
River (to be published in May 2008)
Japanese Alpine News Vol. 9 (to be issued in May 2008)