

1958/60 Expeditions to Chile – Review over 63/60 years

1. Introduction

In the late 1950s, Alpine Club of Kobe University (ACKU) sent two expeditions to Chile for joint climbing with Federación de Andinismo y Excursionismo de Chile (FEACH). The results of these expeditions to Patagonia and the Central Andes of Chile are documented in Japanese and English/Spanish and kept in ACKU archives, and detailed reports of each expedition, including 63rd and 60th anniversary reviews, are included in “First Ascent” section of ACKU website. The following are summaries of the above expeditions.

2. Expedition 1958 to Patagonia

—The Situation Surrounding Mountaineering in Japan and Chile

In the late 1950s, the Japanese mountaineering community was influenced by the success of the Himalaya 8,000-meter summit, a national project, and ACKU began to talk about its orientation toward overseas mountains. The focus of this discussion was South America, with which ACKU had kept a close relationship since before World War II, and the contact with mountaineering groups in various countries during a research trip to South America by then ACKU President Prof. Kaoru Tanaka led to a convergence of target areas in Chile.

At that time, modern mountaineering in the high Andes was beginning to take off in Chile, and the number of young climbers who had acquired ice and snow techniques was increasing among FEACH-affiliated groups in Chile.

At this time, Prof. Tanaka stopped by Chile and met with FEACH president, and they agreed to conduct a joint climbing expedition in Chile.

—Agreement on a joint expedition between Japan and Chile

In Chile, as domestic mountaineering became more active, there was an increasing demand for authentic equipment, especially for young mountaineers, but foreign currency restrictions made it difficult to obtain such equipment.

On the other hand, in Japan, equipment developed for the successful national ascent of Mt. Manaslu and lightweight tents and clothing made of advanced synthetic fibers, which were rapidly evolving at the time, were abundantly available on the market.

A give-and-take relationship was established when the two countries compensated for what they lacked, and the Japanese side brought a complete set of equipment to Chile and donated it all to FEACH after the expedition

was over. The Chilean side covered all accommodation expenses for the Japanese team, and a barter arrangement was established, resulting in the formation of a climbing team for a joint mountaineering expedition.

In 1958, foreign currency was scarce in Japan, and the Japanese team members and their equipment were transported to the port of Valparaiso, Chile, by a regular cargo ship, with all round-trip travel expenses paid in Japanese yen.

—Selection of Mountains to be Climbed

It was not an easy task to narrow down and determine the target of the climb within the framework of a joint expedition. For example, on the Japanese side, we only had the common sense criteria of wanting to climb high, unknown mountains. North and South Patagonian Ice-Caps, which were beginning to attract attention for its rock and ice, emerged as the candidates, and Co. Arenales (3365m), the highest peak in its southern range of the northern Cap, was finally selected as the goal. Rising behind Glacier Colonia, the entire massif was covered in snow and ice, and this beautiful virgin peak was considered the queen of the south region of Hielo Patagonico del Norte.

—The challenge to North Patagonian Ice-Cap, which had never been explored
The target massif was located at the far end of a completely unexplored area. Our approach was by horseback along River Baker, where there were only a few settler farms, and finally by boat across the unexplored Lake Colonia to set up base camp. For a summary (63rd Review) of the process of the ascent of Co. Arenales, which was accomplished using the polar method by setting up five high camps from here, please refer to Documents A - E of First Ascent (Exp 1958).

CHILE-JAPAN JOINT EXPEDITION TO PATAGONIA-1958 (63th Anniversary Review)

(日本語ページ)	(English Part)
[HPアップ記事(posted article)]* 日本・チリ合同パタゴニア遠征から63年 —1958年のアレナレス岳登頂と同山域の踏査について— ACKU Journal No. 22, April, 2022, p109-133 (with Translation Guide).	63th Anniversary Review of Chilean-Japanese Expedition to Patagonia, 1958—Ascent of Cerro Arenales and Exploration of Adjacent Areas* with Frontispiece photo of Co. Arenales. (Summary of ACKU Journal No. 22 article) Complete List of references for Review article in ACKU Journal No. 22*
[リンク記事] (Link article to outside source) アレナレス山の初登頂—日本・チリ合同パタゴニア・アンデス探検(1958年) 日本山岳会「山岳53年」(1958/pdf #9-36) (http://jac.or.jp/sangakuhensyuu/1958optimisation.pdf)	Ascent of Cerro Arenales, Japan-Chile Joint Expedition to Patagonia, 1958, JAC Journal (Sangaku), vol. 53 (1958) Japan Alpine Club* (outline)

Note:Files* are posted in *First Ascent* of ACKU HP.

3. Expedition 1960 to Chilean Central Andes

This expedition was organized and realized in the same way as Exp 58 to Patagonia in 1958, with the aim of training the next generation of young mountaineers through the friendship that had developed between the members of the two countries after Exp 1958 ended with the first ascent of Co. Arenales. The goal of the expedition was to foster the friendship that had developed between the members of the two countries and to train the next generation of young mountaineers. Specifically, the plan targeted Chilean Central Andes, where many 5,000-meter peaks remained unexplored. The basic framework of the joint mountaineering operation followed that of Exp 1958, with Chile's FEACH and Japan's ACKU taking the lead in dispatching two young graduates and a student climber.

On the Chilean side, a new organization called "Academia" was created within FEACH to recruit participants from its branches. In addition, three members who had participated in Exp 1958 joined us. Three mountain ranges were selected for the joint expedition, which lasted a total of 70 days. The Chilean leader of the first range (Yeso Valley) and the third range (Rio Colorado Basin) was a former member of the Patagonia expedition of 1958.

Exp 60 was to be held in the "back mountains of the capital" east of Santiago, the capital of Chile. At the time there were many unclimbed peaks of intermediate height. During the period of joint climbing activities 12 peaks were conquered, 8 peaks of which were recorded as the first ascent.

The results of the exploration and climbing activities in the three mountain ranges during Exp 1960 were partially used in the Andinista Maps (1/50,000) for climbers published officially by the professional agency. For example, the names of several peaks christened in the course of the joint expedition were quoted in the maps above mentioned.

For a detailed record and summary (60th Review), please refer to Document A-D in First Ascent (Exp 1960).

JOINT EXPEDITION TO CHILEAN CENTRAL ANDES-1960 (60th Anniversary Review)

(日本語ページ)	(English Part)
[HPアップ記事(posted article)]* 日チ合同チリ中央アンデス遠征から60年によせて ACKU News 45/Feb., 2021, p36-46	60th Anniversary Review of Chile-Japan Joint Expedition to Chilean Central Andes-1960* (Summary of ACKU News No. 45 article)
[HPアップ記事に添付]* 登山写真集 (Climbing Photo Album) As for English captions, please refer to the right file. →	List of translated Captions (English) for Climbing Photos, Chilean Central Andes, 1960*
[リンク記事] (Link article to outside source) チリ中央アンデスの山々—第2次日本・チリ合同遠征(1960)— 日本山岳会「山岳56年」(1961/pdf #158-181) http://jac.or.jp/sangakuhensyuu/1961optimisation.pdf	Chilean Central Andes, 1960, JAC Journal (Sangaku), vol. 56 (1961) Japan Alpine Club* (outline)

Note: Files* are posted in *First Ascent* of ACKU HP.

4. Conclusion

These two expeditions to Chile were successful because they were conducted jointly, which had never been done before. Through the results of the mountaineering expeditions, we contributed to the introduction of Chile, which was located on the west coast of the Pacific Ocean in South America, a relatively unfamiliar country to Japan at the time. These expeditions were supported by The Mainichi, one of Japan's leading newspapers at the time, and was the first to report in Japan through various media on the joint mountaineering expedition and educational articles about the extremely different geography and climate of the southern and central regions of Chile, which stretched from north to south. All of these key documents, listed in the table below, are kept in ACKU Archives. Together with the records of mountaineering activities referred to in "First Ascent," they tell the history of ACKU's overseas mountaineering activities in the late 1950s.

REPORTS BY EXPEDITIONS OF 1958 & 1960

Expedition	Official Report	Others
Patagonia 1958	Japan Alpine Club Sangaku No.53, 1958	Book published by The Mainichi
		Movie filmed, edited & released by The Mainichi (now up in Net with English captions. https://youtu.be/PHUQxWzTJ50)
Chile Central Andes, 1960	- do - Sangaku No. 56, 1961	The Mainichi's sponsorship announcement, Nov. 13, 1969, news on successful climb, July 4 and on others, July 22, 1960.

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