

## SOME NOTES ON THE DARRAH-I-PARSHUI (CENTRAL AFGHAN HINDU KUSH)

BY WOLFGANG FREY

*(Four illustrations: nos. 78-81)*

**T**HE Darrah-i-Parshui is situated south-east of Pt. 6248 m. (Koh-i-Mondi, 6234 m.) on the International World Map 1:1 million (sheet NI-42) and covers the entire area of the Parshui river, which flows into the Munjan river above the village of Tilli on the true right side. This territory is  $35^{\circ} 40' N.$  and  $71^{\circ} 0' E.$  of Greenwich and is shown on the advance copies of the maps of the Cartographical Institute of Kabul, Afghanistan, Nr. 505 B IV, 505 D II, and 506 A III.

The highest peaks of the Darrah-i-Parshui are Koh-i-Tundy Shagai Sha (6121 m.) and Koh-i-Parshui (6010 m.), both of which are a part of the Hindu Kush main range. At this point the Hindu Kush is the watershed between the large river systems of the Amu Daria (Oxus) and the Indus and the border runs here between Badakshan and Nuristan.

These two mountains of 6000 m. and the surrounding mountains above 5000 m. were the destination and working district of the Hindukusch Expedition 1965 der Deutschen Naturfreunde, on their first expedition, from July 13 to August 14, 1965. The party was led by M. Keierleber (34): the other members were K. Gross (30), K. Hiller (22), G. Holch (28), H. Gall (28), S. Akram (24), and W. Frey (23).

In the course of the expedition the members succeeded in making the first ascents of two mountains of 6000 m., thirteen of 5000 m., and one of 4000 m.; the second ascent of one mountain of 6000 m. and the third ascent of one of 5000 m.

### CLASSIFICATION OF THE DARRAH-I-PARSHUI

During the first reconnaissance of this mountain area it was found expedient to divide it into the following sections:

1. Northern part: mountains north of the Base Camp (see map).
2. Southern valley: Chapkotala.
3. Eastern valley: Tundy Shagai Sha.
4. Northern valley: not named.



MAP OF THE DARRAH-I-PARSHUI BASED ON ADVANCE COPIES OF THE 1:50,000 MAPS OF THE CARTOGRAPHICAL INSTITUTE OF KABUL.

*Key*

- ▲ Peak which has been climbed
- △ Unclimbed peak
- W Lake
- NF Peak climbed by the 1965 expedition
- BNF Peak climbed by the 1966 expedition

## THE TWO 6000 M. PEAKS

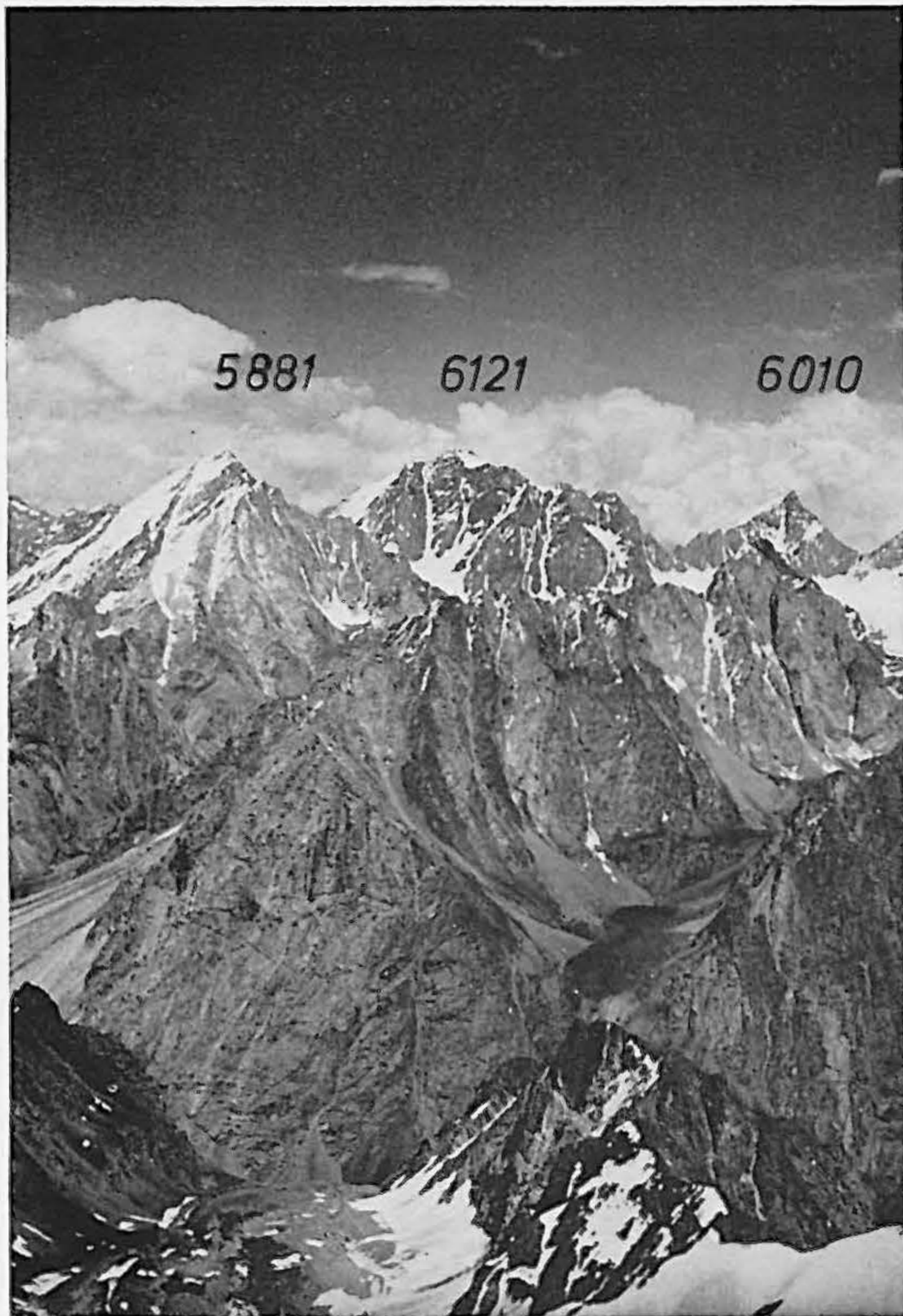
Base Camp was set up on July 13, 1965, at the fork of the Parshui river. From here the first reconnaissances took place into the high valleys, and ascents were made of the first 5000 m. peaks (Pt. 5218 m. and Pt. 5180 m.). These two peaks proved to be outstanding view points. It was possible partly to fix the routes to the two 6000-ers of the area. Immediately the first reconnaissances of the approaches to these mountains started; they were to end with the first ascent of Koh-i-Parshui (6010 m.).

On July 19 H. Gall, G. Holch, and W. Frey advanced for the first time from the Base Camp (3700 m.) into the Eastern valley (Tundy Shagai Sha) up to a height of 5100 m. The ascent to the bivouac (marked X on the map) was made mainly on the true right side of this valley. As from this side the approach to both mountains could not be observed very well, H. Gall and W. Frey decided on July 20 to move up into the upper glacier basin. From here four prominent ice-couloirs lead to the ridge connecting Pt. 6121 and Pt. 6010. The two climbers chose the second ice-couloir (seen from the foot of the mountain), which leads to the North-west ridge of Pt. 6010. After crossing this couloir it became apparent that the way to the peak was open. The remaining 500 m. of this ice-couloir (up to  $45^{\circ}$ - $50^{\circ}$ ) were ascended in one and a half hours to the ridge and the summit was reached at 1.30 p.m. On the same day the descent took place by the North-west ridge and the ice-couloir to the glacier and back to the Base Camp, where the party arrived at 8 p.m.

The second ascent of this mountain was made by the same route on August 10 by G. Holch.

On the occasion of the first ascent the approach to Pt. 6121 was discovered. It turned out that at the lowest spot in the ridge between Pt. 6121 and Pt. 6010 it was necessary to traverse Nuristan territory in order to attain the glacier which flows in a south-south-easterly direction from the top of Pt. 6121. For this reason it was necessary to set up a high camp (marked O on the map). The baggage was carried up by local men. The camp was set up by July 22 at a height of 4800 m. below Pt. 5031. From this camp M. Keierleber, K. Gross, and K. Hiller started out on July 25. They again climbed to the upper glacier basin, and crossed the ridge at the lowest point to the glacier flowing south-south-east. The peak could not be reached that day and the climbers bivouacked at a height of 5450 m. On July 26 the ascent was continued up the glacier and the summit was reached at 11 a.m. On the same day the descent to the high camp took place.

This was the only possible route for a first ascent, as all couloirs which led directly to Pt. 5850 and Pt. 6121 were considered much too dangerous.



*Photo: H. Ziegenhardt]*

DARRAH-I-PARSHUI: THREE OF THE SUMMITS CLIMBED BY THE 1965 EXPEDITION, SEEN FROM THE WEST. *Left to Right:* PT. 5881 M., KOH-I-TUNDY SHAGAI SHA (6121 M.) AND KOH-I-PARSHUI (6010 M.).

(No. 78)



*Photo: W. Frey, Hindukusch Kundfahrt 1965 der deutschen Naturfreunde]*

KOH-I-PARSHUI, SHOWING THE UPPER PART OF THE ROUTE OF ASCENT. THE UNCLIMBED 500 M. NORTH-WEST ICE-COULOIR IS DIRECTLY BENEATH THE SUMMIT.

(No. 79)



*Photo: W. Frey, Hindukusch Kundfahrt 1965 der deutschen Naturfreunde]*

DARRAH-I-PARSHUI: PT. 5881 M. SHOWING THE ROUTE OF ASCENT BY THE NORTH-WEST FACE.

(No. 80)



*Photo: W. Frey, Hindukusch Kundfahrt 1965 der deutschen Naturfreunde]*

DARRAH-I-PARSHUI: THE UNCLIMBED 800 M. NORTH PILLAR OF PT. 5606 M.

(No. 81)

## FIRST ASCENTS OF FURTHER 5000 M. PEAKS AND OTHER ASCENTS

Altogether the members of the expedition ascended for the first time thirteen mountains of 5000 m. and one of 4000 m.

The list of peaks climbed (in addition to Pts. 6121 and 6010) is: Pt. 5218 (NF 1); Pt. 5180 (NF 2); Pt. 5585 (NF 3); Pt. 5640 (NF 4); Pt. 5850 (NF 5); Pt. 5339 (NF 6); Pt. 5760 (NF 7), third ascent: Pt. 5881 (NF 13); Pt. 5229 (NF 8); Pt. 5100 (NF 9); Pt. 4930 (NF 10); Pt. 5321 (NF 11); Pt. 5415 (NF 12); Pt. 5622 (NF 14); Pt. 5210 (NF 15). All the mountains climbed are shown on the advance copy of the Afghan map. Detailed information on the routes of the ascents can be found in the literature mentioned below.

On August 1 the Kotal Parshui (5150 m.), in the Darrah-i-Parshui area, was reconnoitred by H. Gall, S. Akram, and W. Frey. This is a pass over which leads a mountain path connecting the two territories of Badakshan and Nuristan.

## FURTHER INTERESTING ROUTES IN THE DARRAH-I-PARSHUI

Although a further (Bavarian) expedition visited this area in 1966 and climbed mountains between the Darrah-i-Parshui and the Darrah-i-Parun, there are numerous unclimbed mountains of 5000 m. and above, all offering new and interesting routes.

Of the unclimbed mountains the following should be mentioned:

Pt. 5740. A very difficult mountain above the southern valley, west of Pt. 5320 (BNF 12).

Pt. 5621 South-east of Pt. 5210 (NF 15), and also the mountains of 5000 m. east of Koh-i-Tundy Shagai Sha.

Even more worth while, however, are the numerous new routes on peaks that have already been climbed. Of the many possibilities, only the following can be mentioned here:

1. North (North-north-east, North-north-west) wall of Koh-i-Tundy Shagai Sha (6121 m.). This is a *c.* 1500 m. high ice-wall with an inclination of up to 55° between 4600 or 4700 m. and 6121 m. The wall can be reached by way of the Kotal Parshui.
2. North-west ice-couloir of Koh-i-Parshui (6010 m.). This is a *c.* 500 m. high ice-couloir with an inclination of up to 55°.
3. North pillar of Pt. 5606 (BNF 9). This is a 800 m. high ice and rock pillar between 4800 and 5600 m. The approach is by way of the Eastern valley, close to the high camp, marked O on the map.
4. North pillar of Pt. 5321 (NF 11). This is a 600 to 700 m. high rock pillar between 4600 and 5300 m. Reached through the Southern valley (Chapkotala).

5. North-north-east ice-wall of Pt. 5621. An approximately 500–600 m. high ice-wall with an inclination of up to 60°. It is reached over the Kotal Parshui.
6. Traverse of Pt. 5415 (NF 12), Pt. 5321 (NF 11), and Pt. 5229 (NF 8). These three peaks stand at the head of the Southern valley.

This is only a short summary of some of the further problems in the Darrah-i-Parshui, which would certainly justify an expedition. They are thoroughly worth while and are also very difficult undertakings at great heights.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Maps. Advance copies of the 1965 map of Afganistan, 1:50,000.

A. Diemberger, 'Neue Kundfahrten in Raume Munjan-Nuristan', *O.A.Z.* no. 1349, 104–113.

W. Frey, 'Die bergsteigerische Erschliessung des Darrah-i-Parshui (Hindukusch)', *Wandern + Bergsteigen*, 18 (4), 12–13.

W. Frey, 'Die Sechstausender des zentralen afghanischen Hindukusch', *O.A.Z.*, 1349, 101–104.

W. Frey, 'Die bergsteigerische Erschliessung 1961–1965', *Zwischen Munjan und Bashgal*, 3–16. With map 1:100,000 (50 × 100 cm.).

W. Frey, 'Interessante Routen im zentralen afghanischen Hindukusch', *O.A.Z.*, no. 1351, 4–5.

H. Gall, 'Aufstieg zum Pt. 6010', *Wandern + Bergsteigen*, 18 (2), 20–21.

K. Gross, 'Hindukusch-Kundfahrt 1965 der Deutschen Naturfreunde', *Wandern + Bergsteigen*, 17–18 (5, 6, 1); 9–11, 9–12, 8–9.

*Hindukusch-Kundfahrt 1966 der Bayrischen Naturfreunde*—Fachgruppe Bergsteigen. Published by the TV 'Die Naturfreunde' Landesverband Bayern.