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YANGTZE THE MOTHER RIVER - Photography, Myth and Deep Mapping

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For my father Wang Xingyi and mother Gao Suying

Mother River

Yan Wang Preston

You come from the snow mountains, the spring tides are your colours;
You ran towards the East Sea, the mighty waves are your sizes;
With your sweet milk, you bring up sons and daughters from all ethnic groups;
With your strong shoulders, you support the mountains and oceans;
We praise the Long River, you are the ever-flowing spring;
We are attached to the Long River, you have the heart of a Mother.

You come from the antiquity, washing dust with your great waves;
You go towards the future, wakening the universe with your roaring water;
With your pure flows, you fertilise our country of flowers;
With your vigorous strength, you push our time forward;
We praise the Long River, you are the ever-flowing spring;
We are attached to the Long River, you have the heart of a Mother.

'Song for the Long River' Theme song for the documentary series 'The Long River' by CCTV, 1983

Yangtze, the Long River, is China's Mother River.
It is my Mother River.
I wish to photograph her,
from the source to the sea, at a precise interval of every 100 kilometres.
6,211 kilometres.
63 shooting locations.

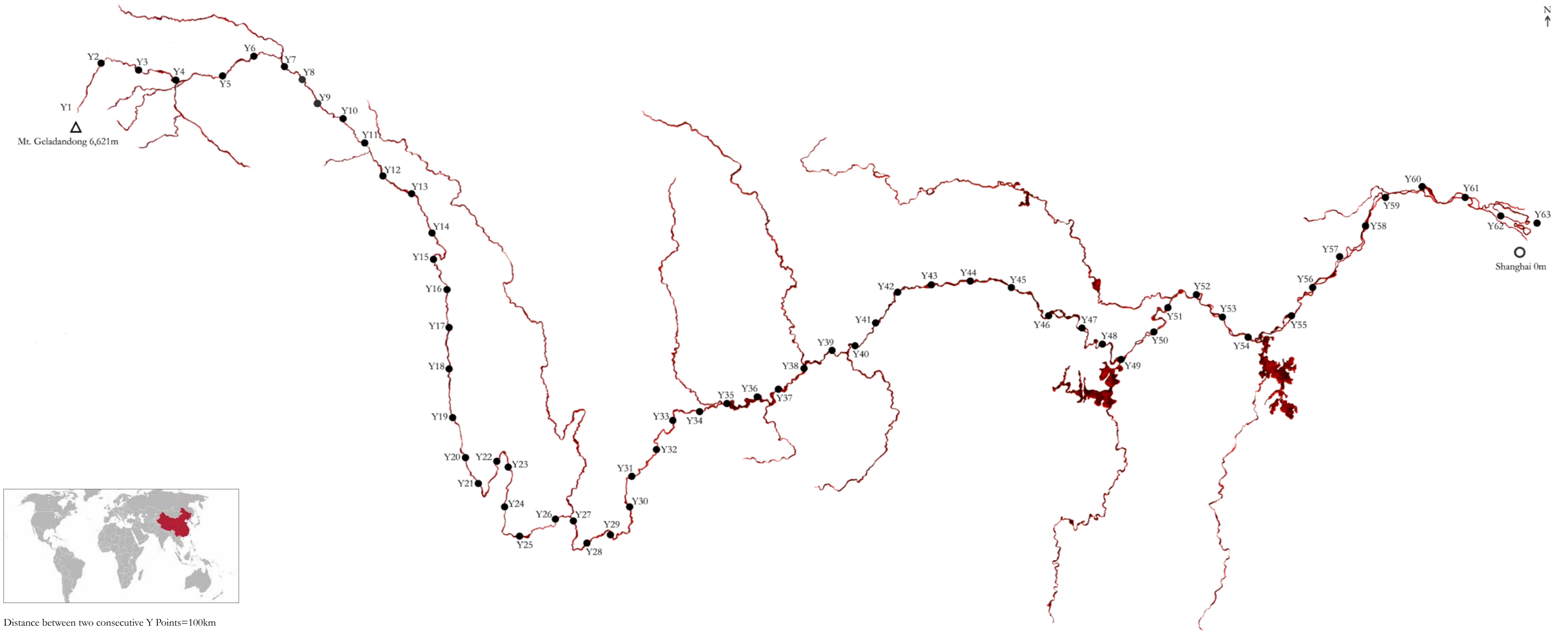
The Y Points

Y1: 33°25'48.49"N	91°2'3.69"E	5,400 m.a.s.l.	Y34: 28°37'20.06"N	104°19'23.99"E	274 m.a.s.l.
Y2: 34°14'12.95"N	91°4'38.23"E	4,806 m.a.s.l.	Y35: 28°45'53.82"N	105°0'13.00"E	258 m.a.s.l.
Y3: 34°9'11.73"N	91°54'2.62"E	4,645 m.a.s.l.	Y36: 28°55'14.62"N	105°37'21.41"E	216 m.a.s.l.
Y4: 34°4'43.21"N	92°47'32.07"E	4,496 m.a.s.l.	Y37: 29°4'38.06"N	106°3'35.48"E	186 m.a.s.l.
Y5: 34°13'3.77"N	93°45'22.96"E	4,422 m.a.s.l.	Y38: 29°28'24.31"N	106°31'30.84"E	160 m.a.s.l.
Y6: 34°39'32.96"N	94°22'30.61"E	4,310 m.a.s.l.	Y39: 29°47'29.44"N	107°5'8.30"E	144 m.a.s.l.
Y7: 34°29'41.29"N	95°11'26.45"E	4,183 m.a.s.l.	Y40: 29°52'44.07"N	107°43'49.12"E	132 m.a.s.l.
Y8: 34°3'16.66"N	95°46'52.09"E	4,086 m.a.s.l.	Y41: 30°24'34.05"N	108°12'32.83"E	108 m.a.s.l.
Y9: 33°43'5.01"N	96°13'51.81"E	4,047 m.a.s.l.	Y42: 30°54'52.84"N	108°44'47.56"E	91 m.a.s.l.
Y10: 33°29'51.88"N	96°41'12.45"E	3,733 m.a.s.l.	Y43: 30°59'44.13"N	109°41'28.35"E	73 m.a.s.l.
Y11: 33°16'5.31"N	97°1'4.03"E	3,596 m.a.s.l.	Y44: 30°59'37.17"N	110°36'2.78"E	62 m.a.s.l.
Y12: 32°40'20.87"N	97°27'39.48"E	3,523 m.a.s.l.	Y45: 30°40'19.15"N	111°18'5.12"E	38 m.a.s.l.
Y13: 32°18'14.95"N	98°12'40.60"E	3,232 m.a.s.l.	Y46: 30°24'40.47"N	111°48'37.35"E	30 m.a.s.l.
Y14: 31°41'3.92"N	98°33'8.27"E	3,040 m.a.s.l.	Y47: 30°3'18.00"N	112°21'32.85"E	28 m.a.s.l.
Y15: 31°15'26.33"N	98°36'13.12"E	2,918 m.a.s.l.	Y48: 29°43'46.47"N	112°46'20.71"E	23 m.a.s.l.
Y16: 30°37'26.99"N	98°55'19.40"E	2,774 m.a.s.l.	Y49: 29°27'1.06"N	113°8'19.71"E	19 m.a.s.l.
Y17: 29°51'10.78"N	99°1'40.24"E	2,495 m.a.s.l.	Y50: 29°57'32.16"N	113°50'48.61"E	18 m.a.s.l.
Y18: 29°3'49.13"N	99°6'52.26"E	2,263 m.a.s.l.	Y51: 30°16'24.72"N	114°4'40.58"E	16 m.a.s.l.
Y19: 28°18'10.53"N	99°15'43.15"E	2,049 m.a.s.l.	Y52: 30°36'23.51"N	114°45'8.07"E	12 m.a.s.l.
Y20: 27°35'46.80"N	99°30'59.15"E	1,922 m.a.s.l.	Y53: 30°8'18.97"N	115°16'27.59"E	11 m.a.s.l.
Y21: 26°57'6.96"N	99°57'6.68"E	1,824 m.a.s.l.	Y54: 29°43'57.48"N	115°58'47.28"E	10 m.a.s.l.
Y22: 27°29'49.39"N	100°11'15.46"E	1,635 m.a.s.l.	Y55: 30°3'28.04"N	116°44'50.19"E	7 m.a.s.l.
Y23: 27°23'41.32"N	100°31'22.81"E	1,488 m.a.s.l.	Y56: 30°36'23.08"N	117°13'11.34"E	5 m.a.s.l.
Y24: 26°41'46.03"N	100°23'53.17"E	1,302 m.a.s.l.	Y57: 31°7'50.10"N	117°49'39.00"E	4 m.a.s.l.
Y25: 26°10'58.67"N	100°37'59.87"E	1,176 m.a.s.l.	Y58: 31°33'58.94"N	118°22'52.53"E	3 m.a.s.l.
Y26: 26°23'17.53"N	101°25'55.45"E	1,055 m.a.s.l.	Y59: 32°10'22.29"N	118°58'0.40"E	2 m.a.s.l.
Y27: 26°25'10.38"N	101°54'14.39"E	967 m.a.s.l.	Y60: 32°17'50.64"N	119°49'18.81"E	2 m.a.s.l.
Y28: 26°3'4.73"N	102°6'8.07"E	902 m.a.s.l.	Y61: 32°0'11.90"N	120°33'46.22"E	1 m.a.s.l.
Y29: 26°13'33.40"N	102°43'9.97"E	796 m.a.s.l.	Y62: 31°33'17.08"N	121°23'4.12"E	0 m.a.s.l.
Y30: 26°47'13.93"N	102°58'40.07"E	672 m.a.s.l.	Y63: 31°17'57.79"N	122°22'16.76"E	0 m.a.s.l.
Y31: 27°23'41.69"N	103°6'0.66"E	545 m.a.s.l.			
Y32: 27°58'8.93"N	103°30'20.40"E	455 m.a.s.l.			
Y33: 28°24'39.18"N	103°50'35.81"E	340 m.a.s.l.			

Y=Yangtze/Yan
 N=North Latitude
 E=East Latitude
 m.a.s.l.=Metres Above Sea Level

The Plan:

1. Divide the entire 6,211km Yangtze River into 62 equal sections on Google Earth. Each section is 100 kilometres long. Mark the 63 dividing points, including the start and end points: Y1–Y63.
2. Start from Y1, at the river source, locate each dividing point as precisely as possible, regardless the cost. Photograph ONLY these dividing points with a large format film camera, whatever they are.
3. Repeat this process 63 times, until Y63, the river mouth, is reached and photographed.



Distance between two consecutive Y Points=100km

Y1: The River Source



Y2: 100km from the river source



Y3: 200km from the river source



Y4: 300km from the river source



Y5: 400km from the river source



Y6: 500km from the river source



Y7: 600km from the river source



Y8: 700km from the river source



Y9: 800km from the river source



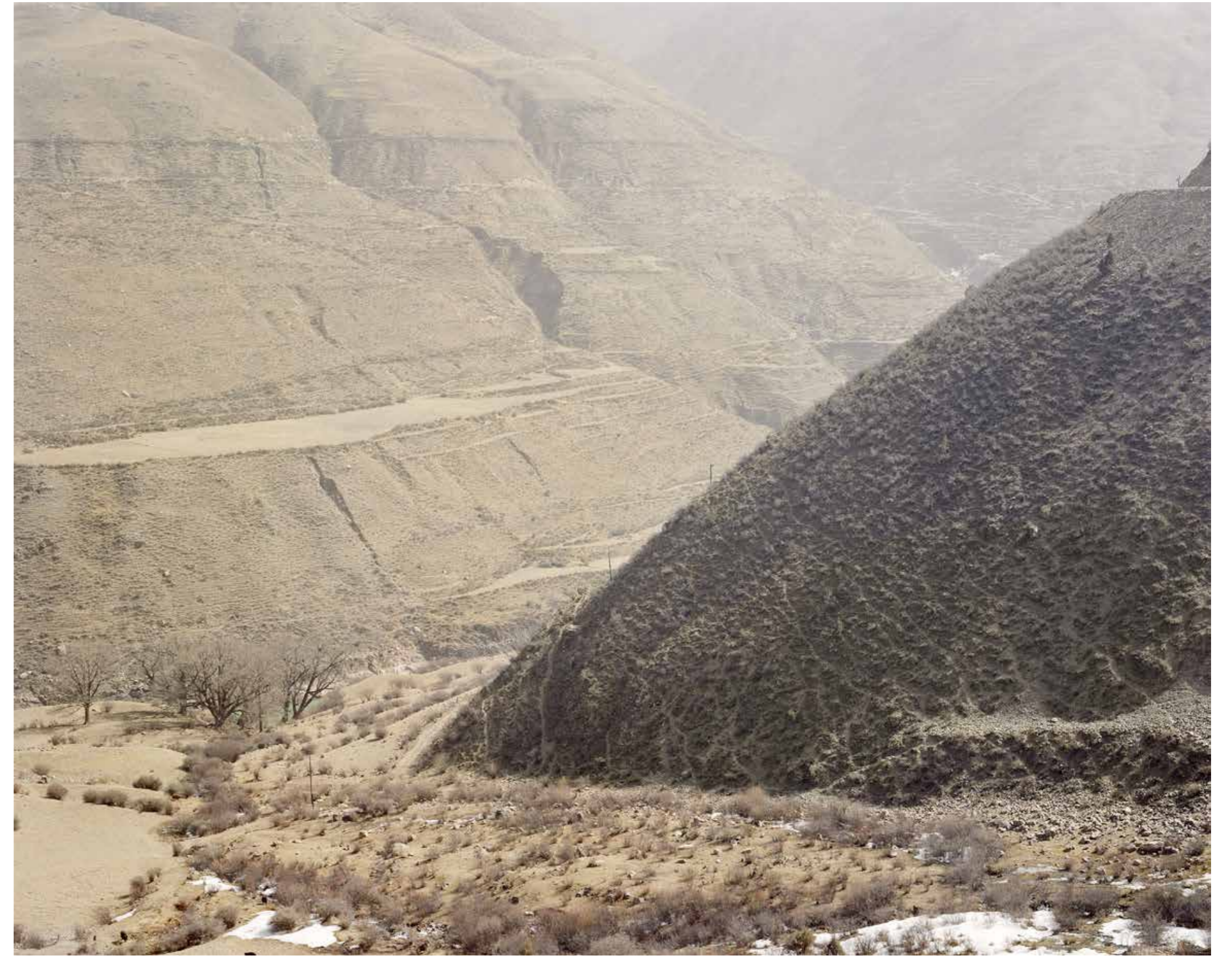
Y10: 900km from the river source



Y11: 1,000km from the river source



Y12: 1,100km from the river source



Y13: 1,200km from the river source



Y14: 1,300km from the river source



Y15: 1,400km from the river source.
Unable to reach after 7 hours' trekking.



Y16:1,500km from the river source.
Unable to reach after searching for two days.



Y17: 1,600km from the river source



Y18: 1,700km from the river source



Y19: 1,800km from the river source



Y20: 1,900km from the river source



Y21: 2,000km from the river source



Y22: 2,100km from the river source



Y23: 2,200km from the river source



Y24: 2,300km from the river source



Y25: 2,400km from the river source



Y26: 2,500km from the river source



Y27: 2,600km from the river source



Y28: 2,700km from the river source



Y29:2,800km from the river source



Y30: 2,900km from the river source



Y31: 3,000km from the river source



Y32: 3,100km from the river source



Y33: 3,200km from the river source



Y34: 3,300km from the river source



Y35: 3,400km from the river source



Y36: 3,500km from the river source



Y37: 3,600km from the river source





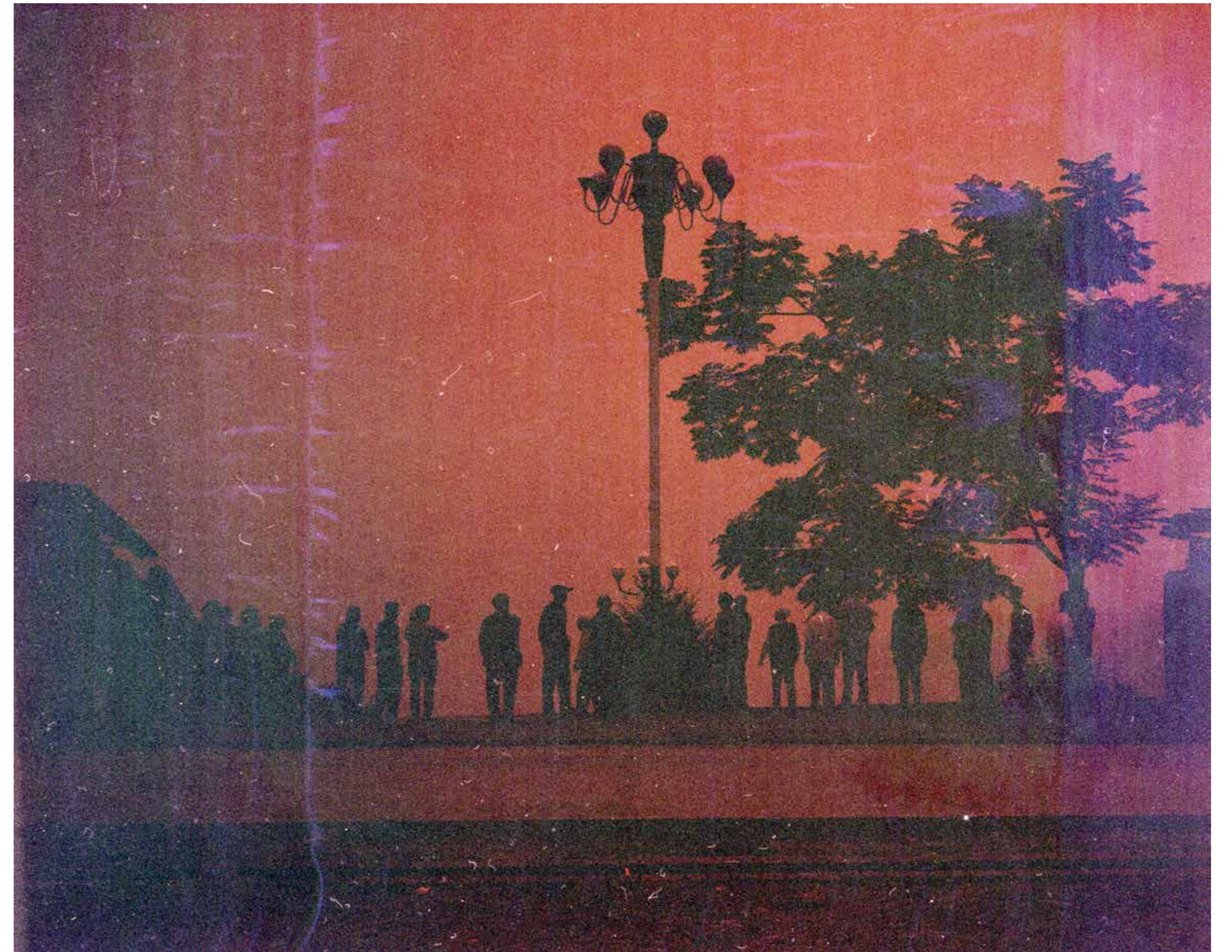
Y39: 3,800km from the river source



Y40: 3,900km from the river source



Y41: 4,000km from the river source
Flim loaded back-to-front by accident



Y42: 4,100km from the river source
Flim loaded back-to-front by accident



Y43: 4,200km from the river source



Y44: 4,300km from the river source



Y45: 4,400km from the river source



Y46: 4,500km from the river source



Y47: 4,600km from the river source



Y48: 4,700km from the river source



Y49: 4,800km from the river source



Y50: 4,900km from the river source



Y51: 5,000km from the river source



Y52: 5,100km from the river source



Y53: 5,200km from the river source



Y54: 5,300km from the river source



Y55: 5,400km from the river source



Y56: 5,500km from the river source



Y57: 5,600km from the river source



Y58: 5,700km from the river source



Y59: 5,800km from the river source



Y60: 5,900km from the river source



Y61: 6,000km from the river source



Y62: 6,100km from the river source



Y63: 6,200km from the river source.
The River Mouth.



A Record of the Journeys:

Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information	Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information
Y1	15–16 Nov 2011. –30°C	Tuotuo River leading from the Jianggudiru Glacier. (left bank) Golmud Area, Qinghai Province. An uninhabited area on the Tibetan Plateau.	Y11	9 Mar 2013	Tongtian River (left bank) Chengduo County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. Near the White Pagoda Memorial for the river–crossing of Princess Wencheng.
Y2	16 Nov 2011	Tuotuo River (right bank) Golmud Area, Qinghai Province. An almost uninhabited area on the Tibetan Plateau.	Y12	12 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Benda Township, Yushu County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province.
Y3	21 Nov 2011	Tuotuo River (right bank) Golmud Area, Qinghai Province. An almost uninhabited area on the Tibetan Plateau.	Y13	13 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Luoxu County, Sichuan Province. A secret logging site.
Y4	5 Nov 2013	Tuotuo River (right bank) Golmud Area, Qinghai Province. An almost uninhabited area on the Tibetan Plateau. 10km upstream from the confluence with Dangqu River.	Y14	14 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Dêgê County, Sichuan Province.
Y5	6 Nov 2013	Tongtian River (left bank) Zhiduo County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. Entrance to the Yanzhanggua Valley (the first valley on the Yangtze) Uninhabited area on the Tibetan Plateau	Y15	Attempted on 15 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Near Jintang Township, Baiyu County, Sichuan Province.
Y6	8 Nov 2013	Tongtian River (left bank) Qumarlêb County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. An uninhabited area on the Tibetan Plateau	Y16	Attempted on 16 & 17 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Near Ranweng Village, Shanyan Township, Baiyu County, Sichuan Province. Three rafters died here in the 1986 Yangtze River rafting. Yebatan Hydroelectric Dam (under construction)
Y7	10 Nov 2013	Tongtian River (left bank) Yege Xiang, Qumarlêb County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. About 40km downstream from the confluence with Chumaer River.	Y17	19 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Near Batang County, Sichuan Province.
Y8	11 Nov 2013	Tongtian River (right bank) Zhiduo County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province.	Y18	19 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Diwu Village, Resi Township, Batang County, Sichuan Province.
Y9	11 Mar 2013	Tongtian River (left bank) Qumarlêb County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province.	Y19	20 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Near Dêrong County, Sichuan Province.
Y10	10 Mar 2013	Tongtian River (left bank) Chengduo County, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province.	Y20	21 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Cangjue Village, Shangri-la County, Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province.

Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information	Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information
Y21	22 & 25 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Xingwen Village, Jinjiang Township, Shangri-la County, Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. 10 km upstream from the Great Bend on the Jinsha River.	Y29	12 & 14 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Near Huangcaoping Village, Luhe Township, Huidong County, Sichuan Province. Near Laojun Rapids. The most dangerous rapids on the Yangtze Baihetan Hydroelectric Dam area (under construction)
Y22	23 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Caokedu Village (Nahsi language, meaning 'the gold hole'), Lijiang City, Yunnan Province. 40 km downstream from the Tiger Leaping Gorge. Liyuan Hydroelectric Dam area (under construction)	Y30	13 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) The Rusty Millstone Port, Jinqiao Township, Qiaojia County, Yunnan Province. Baihetan Hydroelectric Dam area (under construction)
Y23	24 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Niukexi Village, Cuiyu Township, Lijiang City, Yunnan Province. Ahai Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y31	15 Jun 2013 +40°C	Jinsha River (left bank) Duiping Town, Jinyang County, Sichuan Province. Xiluodu Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed). The second largest dam in China.
Y24	26 Mar 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) The Yellow Eyebrow Village, Golden River Township, Lijiang City, Yunnan Province. Dragon Mouth Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y32	16 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Near Huanghua Town, Leibo County, Sichuan Province. Xiaoluodu Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed) (Y32 was inaccessible due to the flooding of the road by the dam. This photo was made on a new bridge over a Yangtze tributary, about 10km away from Y32.)
Y25	26 Mar & 5-6 June 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) The Yellow Eyebrow Village, Golden River Township, Lijiang City, Yunnan Province. Dragon Mouth Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y33	17 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Gumi Town, Leibo County, Sichuan Province. Xiangjiaba Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)
Y26	7 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) The Ants' Tomb, Yongren County, Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. Confluence of Wanma River and Jinsha River Said to be one of the best places for Fengshui in China Guanyinyan Hydroelectric Dam area (under construction)	Y34	18 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Shuifu Country, Sichuan Province. The viewing pavillion for the Xiangjiaba Hydroelectric Dam
Y27	9 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Jingmenkou, Yizi Village, Dalongtan Township, Panzhihua City, Sichuan Province. Jinsha Hydroelectric Dam area (under construction)	Y35	19 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (left bank) Changjiang Village, Jiang'an County, Yibin City, Sichuan Province.
Y28	11 Jun 2013	Jinsha River (right bank) Near Baimakou Village, Wuding County, Chongxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. Natural landslide site awaiting to be treated and flooded Wudongde Hydroelectric Dam area (under construction)	Y36	20 Jun 2013 +44°C	Long River (left bank) The 'Fishing Harbour' Village, Taifu Town, Luzhou City, Sichuan Province.
			Y37	25 Mar 2011	Long River (right bank) Baisha (White Sand) Village, Jiangjin Town, Chongqing Municipal City.

Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information	Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information
Y38	15 Mar 2011	Long River (right bank) Underneath Lijiatuo Bridge, Jiulongpo District, Chongqing Municipal City. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y47	23 Sep 2013 & 30 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Lingguanmiao Hazard Zone, Jingzhou Embankment, Jiangling County, Hubei Province.
Y39	14 Sep 2013 & 22 May 2014	Long River (left bank) The White Tower Village, Changshou District, Chongqing Municipal City. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y48	24 Sep 2013 & 30 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Changjiang Village, Wujia Township, Shishou City, Hubei Province.
Y40	15 Sep 2013 & 23–24 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Fengdu Country, Chongqing Municipal City. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y49	25 Sep 2013 & 31 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Chengling Rock Cliff, Yueyang City, Hunan Province. The confluence location of Dongting Lake and the Yangtze River. One of the three most famous rock cliffs on the Yangtze River.
Y41	16 Sep 2013 & 24–25 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Xituo Town, Shizhu Tujia Autonomou County, Chongqing Municipal City. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed)	Y50	26 Sep 2013 & 31 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Yuyue Township, Jiayu County, Xianning City, Hubei Province.
Y42	17 Sep 2013 & 25 May 2014	Long River (left bank) Aiguo Village, Shuangjiang Town, Yunyang County, Chongqing Municipal City. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed).	Y51	14 Oct 2013 & 1 Jun 2014	Long River (right bank) Hongdeng Village, Jinkou Township, Jiangxia District, Wuhan City, Hubei Province.
Y43	18 Sep 2013 & 26 May 2014	Long River (left bank) Liyutuo Village, Quchi Township, Wushan County, Chongqing Municipal City. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed).	Y52	15 Oct & 25 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Wagou Village, Shuangliu Street, Xinzhou District, Wuhan City, Hubei Province.
Y44	19 Sep 2013 & 27 May 2014	Long River (left bank) Xietan Xiang, Zigui County, Yichang City, Hubei Province. Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam area (constructed).	Y53	16 Oct & 24 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Qipan Island Port, Huangshi City, Hubei Province.
Y45	20–21 Sep 2013 & 28–29 May 2014	Long River (left bank) No.13 Port, Yichang City, Hubei Province. Approximately 10 kilometres downstream from Gezhou Hydroelectric Dam. Border between the upper and the middle streams of the Yangtze River.	Y54	17 Oct & 24 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Linjiang Road, Xunyang District, Jiujiang City, Jiangxi Province.
Y46	22 Sep 2013 & 29 May 2014	Long River (right bank) Qingxingtai Township, Zhijiang City as part of Yichang City, Hubei Province.	Y55	18 Oct & 23 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Niuji Village, Xiangyu Township, Dongzhi Country, Chizhou City, Anhui Province. The border between Jiangxi and Anhui Provinces.

Locations	Dates Reached	Place Information
Y56	21 Oct & 23 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Yingpan Village, Changfeng Xiang, Anqing City, Anhui Province.
Y57	22 Oct & 22 Nov 2013	Long River (branching channel, right bank) Xuba Xiang, Tongling City, Anhui Province.
Y58	23 Oct & 21 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Fuhua Port and Jinzhu Tower, Ma'anshan City, Anhui Province . Confluence of Gushu River and the Yangtze River. Near Li Bai's Tomb. The battefield between Taiping Rebellions and Qing goverment army in 1853.
Y59	24 Oct & 21 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Sheshan Port, Qixiashan District, Nanjing City, Jiangsu Province. Very close to Mt. Qixia.
Y60	25 Oct & 20 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Yuhua Village, Yangzhong City, Jiangsu Province.
Y61	27 Oct & 19 Nov 2013	Long River (right bank) Duanshan Port, Zhangjiagang City, Jiangsu Province.
Y62	5 Oct & 16 Nov 2013	Long River (branching channel, left bank) Yingzhou Park, Chongming Island, Shanghai Municipal City.
Y63	16 Nov 2013	The mouth of the Long River Dongtan Wetland, Yingdong Village, Chongming Island, Shanghai Municipal City.

Notes:

1. The river's names:

The Yangtze River has different names in different regions, some of these names are adopted in my record.

For example:

'Tuotuo' is the river's Tibetan name for the tributary leading from the Jianguodirou Glacier.

'Tongtian River' means 'a river leading to the Sky/Heaven.'

'Jinsha River' means 'a river with gold sand'. The river sand in this stretch is rich in gold. The stretch after the Jinsha River is called the 'Long River'. Although the Long River still has many different names in different areas, I have opted not to use them in the record.

2. For a long distance, the river is the border between various Chinese

provinces, such as between Tibet and Sichuan Province, or between Yunnan Province and Sichuan Province. Even within the same provinces, different sides of the river are usually different places with different names. During the journeys, we interpreted the GPS numbers into real places on the maps, then chose to go either bank based on the access possibilities. Therefore, the record shows the places that I managed to reach, but these are not the only possible destinations.

3. The latitude: each shooting location was determined by the combination of GPS readings, Chinese road maps, local land shapes and particularly, the river shapes. In most occasions, the locating was reasonably accurate. Once a pre-determined point was reached, I would simply stay there in order to communicate with the site and to photograph. Normally, my coverage area would be within a few minutes' walk. When it was impossible to reach the pre-determined points, negotiations with myself had to be carried out. Such points were either abandoned, or substituted.

4. At lunch time on the 29th October 2013, having reached Y62, 6,100 kilometres away from the river source, I discovered that all the films from Y39 to Y62, 24 points in total, were ruined due to my operational mistake. For this reason, the photographs from Y39 to Y62 are re-shoots made in November 2013 and May – June 2014.

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Wang Rui (High-altitude expedition driver, China)

Yang Muqiu (Assistant, China)

Alex Gabbay (Filmmaker, UK)

Ma Zhandong (Filmmaker, China)

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Eleanor Mulhearn (UK)