

# Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage: The great mountaineering classic

Hermann Buhl

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In 1953 Hermann Buhl made the first ascent of Nanga Parbat - the ninth-highest mountain in the world, and the third 8,000-metre peak to be climbed, following Annapurna and Everest. It was one of the most incredible and committed climbs ever made. Continuing alone and without supplementary oxygen, Buhl made a dash for the summit after his partners turned back. On a mountain that had claimed thirty-one lives, an exhausted Buhl waded through deep snow and climbed over technical ground to reach the summit, driven on by an 'irresistible urge'. After a night spent standing on a small ledge at over 8,000 metres, Buhl returned forty-one hours later, exhausted and at the very limit of his endurance. Written shortly after Buhl's return from the mountain, Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage is a classic of mountaineering literature that has inspired thousands of climbers. It follows Buhl's inexorable rise from rock climber to alpinist to mountaineer, until, almost inevitably, he makes his phenomenal Nanga Parbat climb. Buhl's book, and ascent, reminded everyone that, while the mountains could never be conquered, they could be climbed with sufficient enthusiasm, spirit and dedication.



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