



Bogda V (5,216m), Northwest Face

China, Xinjiang, Tien Shan, Bogda Ola Range

The 2019 route on the northwest face of Bogda V. The final difficult ridge to the top is not visible. Photo: Li Zongli

Dili Xiati and Li Zongli made their first attempt on the northwest face of Bogda V in 2010. [Bogda V is here defined as the summit at the western end of the Bogda Ola chain. At 5,216m, it is the fifth-highest summit of the Bogda group and lies a little over 2km southwest of the main summit, at 43°47'18.65"N, 88°18'38.29"E. It was first climbed by Ryohei Uchida's Japanese expedition in 1981, via the north ridge.] This was a couple of years after they had graduated from the Chinese Mountaineering Development Institute (CMDI) program, with mountain guide training coordinated by a Chamonix guide. The two retreated after four pitches in 2010 due to a sudden storm.

In 2012 they made a second attempt, this time accompanied by Kang Hua, a Chinese guide who had been co-instructor on the first CMDI program. After climbing 900m of the ice face, they dropped their stove and, faced with several days without drinking water, they descended.

In 2013 all three tried again and this time bailed not far from the summit. During the descent, Li Zongli was fortunate to escape with his life, when he fell 600m. Descending in the dark, Dili Xiati and Kang Hua lost their way. Luckily, there was a mountain guide course in the massif at the time, and the participants were able to assist with the rescue of the injured Li Zongli and the others.

Starting in 2016, Li Zongli was busy trying to climb Minya Konka, which he succeeded in doing in 2018 (see AAJ 2019), but Bogda V was never far from his mind. In August 2019 the same trio tried again. [July and August are traditionally the months for attempting the Bogda peaks, but Dili, a relative local, has seen the season slip to September, so the team timed their ascent for very late August.]

From base camp to Camp 1 was just two hours; the climbers were quite familiar with the route. The climbing from Camp 1 to Camp 2, near a crevasse close to the upper ridge, had been all on névé on previous attempts but was now hard ice. From Camp 2 they made their summit bid on August 28. After climbing along the snow ridge for 100m, they found less snow and more hard ice. They traversed one pitch to the start of a 30m ice couloir. The ice was thin and hard in the couloir, so Li Zongli belayed only halfway up the couloir, at around the same height he had fallen in 2013. (Though he looked, he was unable to locate the rock where he slipped.) After climbing a slab they reached the crux of the route, a steep chimney, where a fixed rope and metal ladder are still in place from the Japanese ascent in 1981. At the top of this section, they began a traverse on very exposed mixed terrain. This was the point from which they had retreated in 2013. Only two pitches remained to the summit, which they reached via a final snow arête. It was a little before 6 p.m.

The descent to Camp 2 took until midnight, and the following day the climbers descended to base camp, largely by Abalakov anchors, reaching camp at 10 p.m. The new route was 1,300m, TD+ 5.10+ AI3+ M5 75°.

– Li Zongli, China, translated by Xia Zhongming, Germany

Images



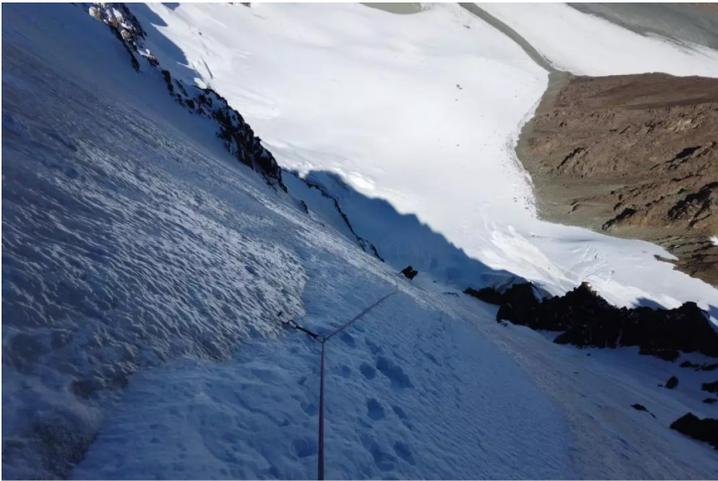
The Bogda Ola Range seen from the northwest, showing the 2019 ascent of Bogda V.



The 2019 Chinese route on the northwest face of Bogda V. The final difficult ridge to the summit is not visible.



The northwest face of Bogda V and route of 2019 Chinese ascent. Bogda I (5,445m) is off picture to the left.



On the northwest face of Bogda V.



On the final ridge just above Camp 2. The route followed the snow crest and then climbed the steep final rock buttress on the left flank.

Article Details

Author	Li Zongli
Publication	AAJ
Volume	62
Issue	94
Page	
Copyright Date	2020
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions