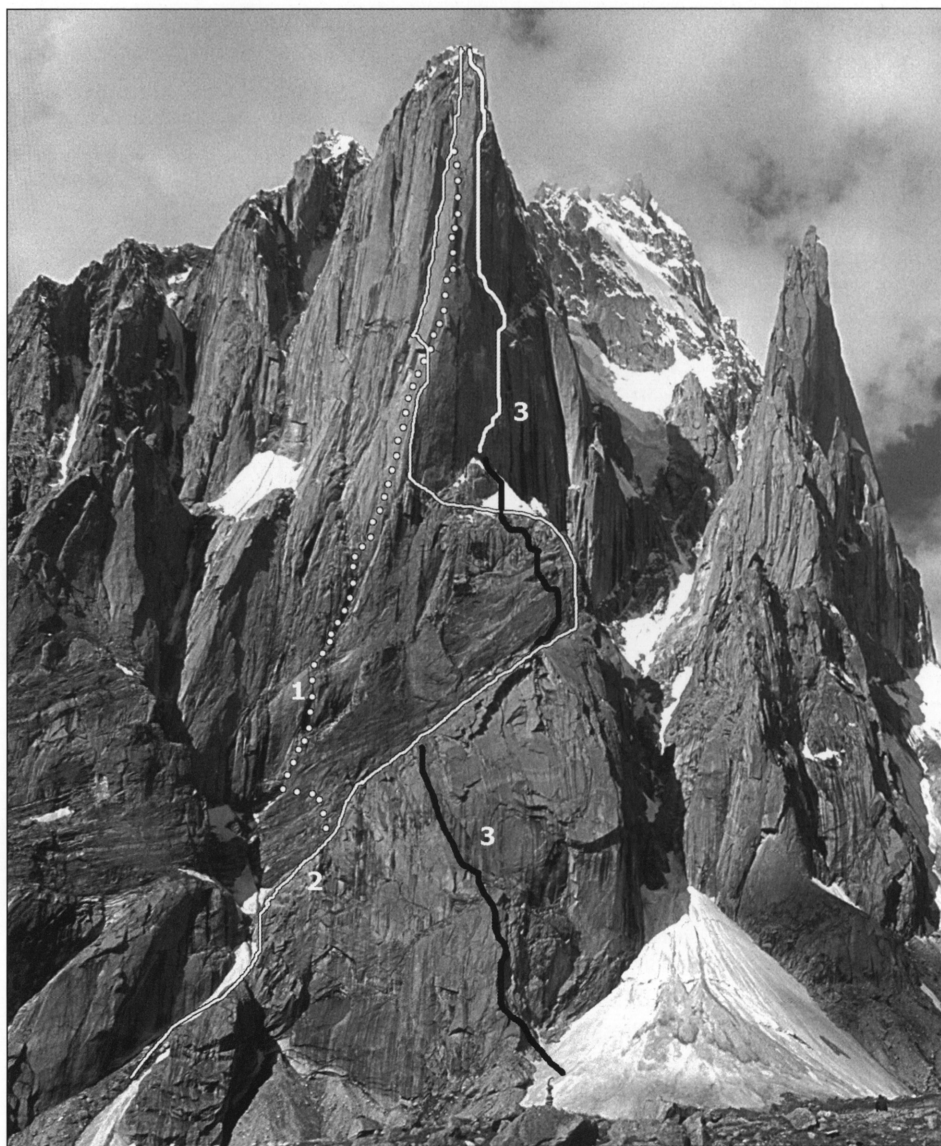


View from low in the Trango approach gully: Trango Tower (T; often erroneously called Nameless Tower), Little Trango (LT), and the Southwest Summit of Great Trango (GT). The line shows Čmárik and Kopold's harrowing descent of the northwest face, with (a) marking the gully that avalanched and swept Kopold 150m. The NW face is home to the 1999 American, Russian, and German routes, while the 2003 Ukrainian attempt climbs the prominent detached pillar just left of the NW face, continuing high up the left skyline of GT's summit tower. The Azeem Ridge (2004) roughly follows the right-hand skyline, and the Čmárik- Kopold route (Assalam Alaikum) ascends farther right, out-of-view. Vlado Linek

*Great Trango, southwest face to south face (Assalam Alaikum), not to summit; Hainabrakk East Tower, south southeast face (Mystical Denmo); Shipton Spire, east face to northeast ridge, to within 80m of summit (Prisoners of the Shipton); and Ship of Fools, attempt.* A joint Czech-Slovak expedition visited the Baltoro from July 26 to August 31. The team comprised eight climbers from Slovakia: Gabo Čmárik, Andrej Kolárik, Igor Koller, Jozef Kopold, Pavol Pekarčík, Juraj Poděbrský, Erik Rabatin, and I. There were four climbers from the Czech Republic: Milan Benian, Martin Klonfar, Petr Piechowicz, and Miroslav Turek. Čmárik, Kopold, Koller, and I had climbed in this region during 2004 and had unfinished projects. In particular Čmárik and Kopold wanted to climb a new line in alpine-style on the south side of Great Trango (6,286m), right of the 2004 American route, Azeem Ridge.

The two started on August 4 in good weather, taking only two small rucksacks and food for four days, no sleeping bags, no mats, no ropes for fixing, and no radios. They planned to move together up the first 1,000m but found the terrain more difficult than expected and were forced to belay. Their progress was slow and not helped by rain and snow throughout the second day. On the fourth day they reached the headwall. That night was very cold, with the temperature down to  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$ , a strong wind, and heavy snowfall. The pair endured a difficult bivouac without sleeping bags. After that, icy or snow-covered rock slowed them down even more. On fifth day they ate their last food and didn't reach the summit ridge until day seven [this was the summit ridge of the ca. 6,250m Southwest summit and not the main summit—



Hainabakk East Tower (ca. 5,650m) from the east. The face is a little over 1,000m in height. To the right is the Cat's Ears Spire (ca. 5,550m). (1) Mystical Denmo on the south-southeast face (34 pitches, VII+ A2; Kolárik-Rabatin, 2005). (2) Tague it to the Top (VI 5.11 C2, Copp-Pennings, 2000). (3) For Better or for Worse (VII 5.12a WI3; Baer-Brock-McCray-Schneider, 2000). *Vlado Linek*

Ed.]. The overall length of their climb was more than 3,000m and involved many pendulums, wet slabs with poor protection, and loose chimneys.

Čmárik and Kopold intended to traverse the Southwest summit and descend via the normal route [it is not necessary to cross to the main summit in order to gain the normal route—see *AAJ 2005* pp. 14-23 on the ascent of the Azeem Ridge—Ed.] but, due to large



An unusual view of Shipton Spire (5,885m), showing the northeast face. Marked is the new Slovak line, Prisoners of the Shipton, which has 21 pitches (VIII A3) up the right side of the southeast face, until it joins Ship of Fools (Ogden-Synnot, 1997) at the notch (A) on the northeast ridge. Above, the Slovaks climbed 14 pitches up the ridge (VIII- WI 5+), following the original line of Ship of Fools over two pinnacles (B) and past a second col (C) to the final ridge, where they retreated 80m below the summit. A photodiagram of all the routes on the southeast face appears in *AAJ* 2005, p. 347. Vlado Linek collection

the first half of the route big-wall style. They completed the second half in alpine-style, reaching the summit on the 23rd. Mystical Denmo gives 1,400m of climbing, with 34 pitches up to VII+ and A2, mainly following cracks. [This new route starts up the 2000 Copp-Pennings line, Tague it to the Top, then moves left to climb directly to the central pillar on the south-southeast face. In the upper half it climbs very close to the Copp-Pennings line, cutting through its leftward horizontal traverse—Ed.]

Koller, Poděbradský, cameraman Pekarčík, and I worked on Shipton Spire (5,885m). In 2004 Koller and I, with the help of Čmárik until he became ill, climbed 17 pitches of a new line up the right edge of the southeast face. Bad weather stopped us just 100 meters below the notch on the northeast ridge where Ship of Fools comes in from the left (*AAJ* 2005, p. 347, photo). Last year we returned to complete it.

We four started up the route on August 1. Through generally unsettled weather we climbed and fixed 10 pitches to a roof shaped like the letter W and dubbed Cassiopeia. In

amounts of snow on the ridge, decided instead to rappel the huge northwest face. They descended through the afternoon and all the next night. At one point Kopold was avalanched 150m. At another point Čmárik fell 30m down icy slabs. At 5:00 a.m. on the 11th, after 16 hours rappelling, they reached Trango Base Camp.

Their route, named Assalam Alaikum, had ca. 90 pitches, with difficulties up to VIII and A2. They left three pitons and two bolts (for pendulums). On the descent they had only their rack, five pitons, and eight remaining bolts for making ca. 60 rappels. They rappelled the face from right to left, crossing the Russian and American routes (and using their rappel anchors), to reach the gully on the left of the face.

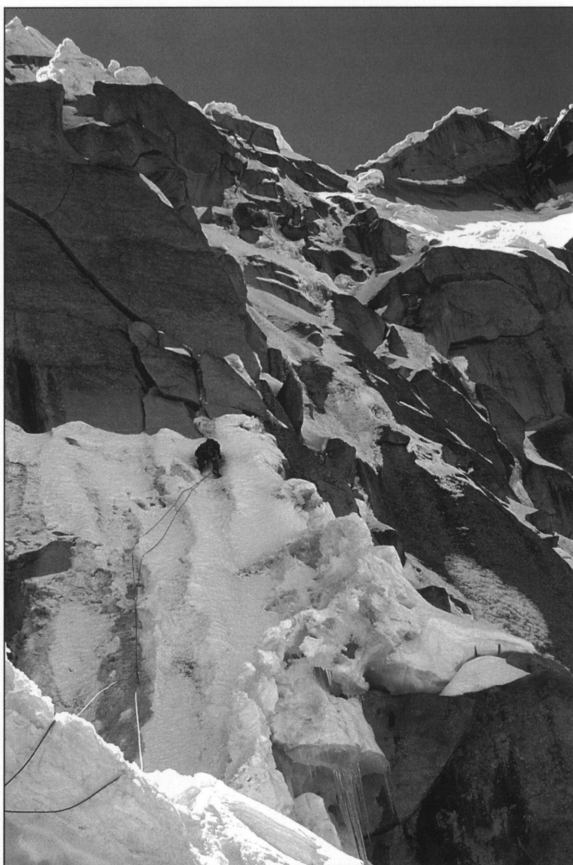
Andrej Kolárik and Erik Rabatin climbed on Hainabrakk East (ca. 5,650m), with the goal of completing a logical direct line up the central pillar in the middle of the face. They started on August 6 but due to bad weather had to return to base camp on three occasions. They fixed and climbed

2004 we had cached rope there. On the 7th we returned to base camp, worried that we might have to organize a rescue for Čmárik and Kopold, who were long overdue on Great Trango. After the latter two returned safely, Koller, Poděbradský, and I began a second attempt. On the 13th we jumared to a ledge at two-thirds height on the face, where we bivouacked. Over the next two days we completed the wall, reaching the notch where we joined Ship of Fools. Although we had climbed the new ground, we wanted to reach the summit. However, on the 16th the weather deteriorated, and as we had no bivouac equipment, we retreated.

We regained the notch on the 19th, this time with a tent, but during the night there was heavy snow, which prevented us from climbing till the afternoon of the 20th, and then only the first two rocky pitches up the ridge. On the 21st we managed three difficult pitches of ice covered with fresh snow and the following day went for the summit. However, Koller took a fall, and the team retreated to our camp at the notch. The 23rd

was a rest day, and on the 24th we decided that only Koller and I would go for the summit. By 5:00 a.m. we two were at the end of the fixed ropes, in clear, cold weather. With Koller in the lead, we climbed for 10 hours up the sharp ridge, overcoming two towers and a four-pitch icy headwall plastered with snow. At 4:00 p.m. we were hit by a vigorous 30-minute snow storm. At 5:30 p.m., only 80m from the summit, we decided to retreat. We had reached the point where the American topo indicates easy terrain to the top, but we were faced with much snow, dangerous cornices, and hard climbing. As the next storm blew in, we started rappelling and regained our tent in the notch at 2:00 a.m. We named the new route as far as the notch Prisoners of the Shipton (900m), which gave 21 pitches up to VIII and A3. Above, the 14 pitches coinciding with Ship of Fools to the summit ridge gave difficulties of VIII- and WI5+.

After fixing the first two pitches of Ship of Fools, Martin Klonfar and Miroslav Turek made a four-day alpine-style ascent as far as the notch. They waited there for two days in bad



Igor Koller leading the 10th pitch above the first notch on the northeast ridge of Shipton Spire. This was the first pitch (M5 WI5+ 90°) of the icy headwall that gives access to the summit ridge. Koller led four more pitches to what should have been easy ground below the summit but dangerous snow above and the onset of more bad weather forced the Slovak team down. *Vlado Linek*



weather and on August 9 retreated. From the 14th to the 16th they climbed the first 15 pitches of Prisoners of the Shipton but again were forced by bad weather to descend.

VLADO LINEK, *Slovak Mountaineering Union, Slovakia*  
*A full article on the Čmárik-Kopold ascent of Assalam Alaikum*  
*will be found earlier in the Journal.*

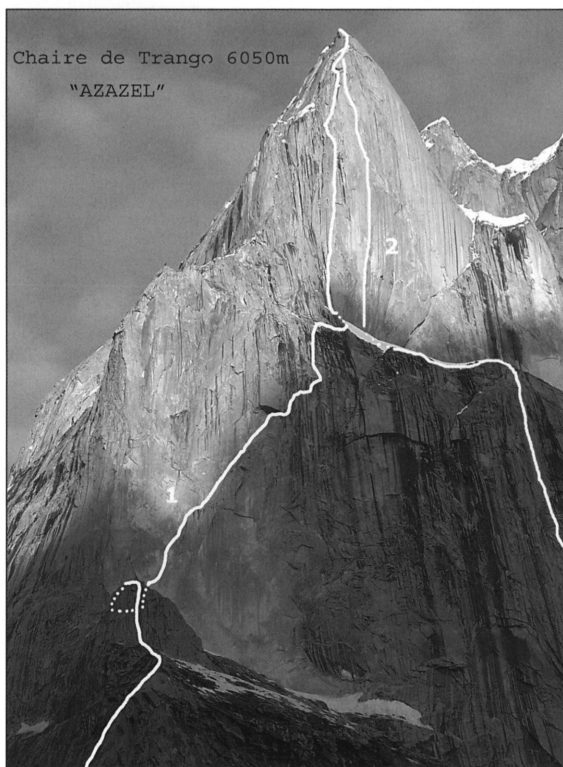
*Trango Pulpit, northeast face, Azazel.* The spirit of Xaver Bongard is still alive. Grand Voyage remains the ultimate, unrepeatable route on Great Trango (6,286m). The steepest flank of the Trango group is the side overlooking the Dunge glacier and our goal was to be a repeat of Grand Voyage. Martial (Cochonette) Dumas, Jean-Yves (Blutch) Fredriksen, and Yann (Mimouse) Mimet, all French, made me an offer I couldn't refuse: to fly from the top of Great Trango while they lowered the sacks and stripped the route.

When we arrived at base camp on the Dunge glacier, the reality we were face-to-face with was different from our dream. Heavy snowfalls in late spring had resulted in bad conditions, even at only 6,000m. Ali Baba, the couloir you climb to reach the base of Grand Voyage was continuously swept by avalanches, even at night. The risk seemed far too great. We changed our objective to Trango Pulpit (6,050m), a prominent shoulder on the long southeast ridge of Great Trango. There was

an obvious unclimbed 1,500m line left of the Norwegian route. The first section would ascend a yellow wall that we could approach from the left, the second ascend the prow above.

Our "lightweight" expedition suddenly had more than 400kg to take on the wall: food for 15 days; two portaledge, nine "pigs," and a water drum. We also had 500m of rope and 27 bolts. Except for bolts, we left nothing on the mountain.

It took four days to bring all the loads to Camp 1, via a snow couloir and a mixed-terrain ridge. After a few days' rest we began our slow ascent in capsule style. The lower wall turned out to be much harder than expected, with first-class aid climbing on mostly beaks, hooks, and expanding flakes. The sky was a perfect blue for seven days, but the heat of the sun kept



The northeast face of Trango Pulpit (6,050m). The left skyline (southeast) ridge is more or less the line taken by More Czech, Less Slovak (ca. 1,400m, VII- A2, Dutka-Rinn-Weisser, 1999). (1) Azazel (ca. 1,500m, VII A3+ M6 WI 4 6a, Beaugey-Dumas-Fredriksen-Mimet, 2005). (2) Norwegian Direct (1,500m, VII A4 5.11, Caspersen-Karlsen-Skjierven-Wold, 1999). Sam Beaugey