

piece of antiquarian intelligence once more confirming the accuracy of Chinese historical records. In describing Kao Hsien-chih's expedition of A.D. 747 across the Pamirs, the T'ang Annals mention that he concentrated his forces at a point on the uppermost Oxus corresponding to the present Sarhad by three routes, from the east, west and north. The first two obviously lay along the Ab-i-Panja, the main branch of the Oxus. But of the northern route, which must have led from the side of the Great Pamir, no information could be gained by me from maps or books. Now enquiries from two much-travelled Kirghiz in my party elicited definite evidence as to an old track still used by Tajik herdsmen of Wakhan leading across the high range south of the Great Pamir lake to Sarhad. Through my glasses I could clearly make out the head of the valley, known as Shor-jilja, up which this route leads. But, alas, the valley lay on the Afghan side of the border as determined by the Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission, and hence it was impossible for me to test the information on the spot.

Travelling along the right bank of the Great Pamir branch of the Oxus which forms the boundary between Russian and Afghan territory, I reached the first village in Wakhan by three marches, just as Marco Polo's road estimate puts it. There at Langar-kisht, near the junction of the Pamir river with the Ab-i-Panja, I received a very kind welcome from the commandant of the small post guarding the upper portion of Russian Wakhan. Even before reaching it my eyes were gladdened by the sight in the distance of the snowy rampart of the Hindukush guarded by needle-like peaks. Its watershed marks the frontier of India.

How near it lies here in Wakhan, separated from Russian