

September 12 I reached the mouth of the open valley in which the considerable river uniting the streams of Shughnan carries its water to the Oxus. A short distance above the junction I arrived at Khoruk, the administrative headquarters of the Russian 'Pamir Division'. Ensconced among groves of walnuts and other fruit trees which an elevation of some 6600 feet allows to grow to a good height, Khoruk is an attractive spot, and the very kind and helpful reception accorded to me by Colonel Yagello, who had by then returned from his visit to Tashkend, made my two days' halt there very pleasant and profitable. The friendly interest shown by this accomplished officer in the antiquarian and other objects of my journey made it possible for me to extend my visit to Shughnan farther than I had originally expected. By his effective help he also greatly facilitated my subsequent passage through the hill territories to the north, then under the rule of the Amir of Bukhara.

At Khoruk civilizing Russian influence manifested itself in various ways, including electric lighting of the small cantonment and a well-frequented Russian school. My brief stay there allowed me to collect useful information about the past of Shughnan and the present ways of its population. The Chinese accounts of the territory contained in the T'ang annals and itineraries of several Buddhist pilgrims agree in ascribing to the people of the 'five *Shih-ni*', *i.e.* Shighnan (an alternative form of the local name), a fierce and intrepid character. Hsüan-tsang, who did not visit Shughnan in person, heard them on his passage through Wakhan described as prone to "murder in cold blood and given to theft and plunder". This account of the Shughni people is fully borne out by the reputation for both bravery