

with passages over shingly slopes and climbs over rock-strewn wastes. Only at a few spots the barren grey and yellow of the rocks was relieved by some green shrubs growing where scanty watercourses forced their way down the fissured slopes. After six hours' steady climbing and scrambling it was a relief to see at last the valley widen again, and two hours more brought me to Ghulmit village. It occupies a wide alluvial fan on the flank of a considerable glacier, the white crest of which could be seen from a distance rising above the orchards and fields.

At Ghulmit that part of the Hunza Valley is entered which is known as Little Guhyal. It takes this name from its inhabitants, Wakhi immigrants from Wakhan or Guhyal on the Oxus. It was easy to notice the change of race in the assembly of well-built handsome village headmen which received me some distance from the village. Headed by the Mir's relation, Muhammad Nafiz, who acts as his representative among the villages of this part of the valley, they escorted me in stately procession to the little orchard of apricot trees where my camp was to be pitched. I was delighted to hear at last the language of Wakhan, which had attracted my attention years before I first came to India, as a remarkably conservative descendant of the ancient tongue of Eastern Iran. It seemed strange that I should have first touched the linguistic borders of old Iran, high up in these mountains. The fact was bound to remind me that the Pamirs which I was about to approach, mark the point of contact not only of great geographical divisions, but also of equally great language families and of the races speaking them. Close to the Kilik Pass is the point where the watersheds bounding the drainage areas of the Oxus, Indus, and Yarkand Rivers meet; and it is plain that as far as history can take us back, these areas belonged to the sphere of the dominant races of Iran, India, and Turkestan.

The Wakhis of Little Guhyal, numbering altogether about