

and had turned back. Just outside the town I began to draw a map which delayed my progress considerably, especially in the populated districts, where you cannot get any suitable perspectives. The road goes SW through tilled, fertile and densely populated districts as far as Tuma. Just beyond the town you cross a ravine, the same one that leads past the wall of the fortress on the west. A little further on we passed between two villages, Tygla on the left and Tomasha on the right of the road, each consisting of 200 houses spread over a large area. A quarter of an hour later we came to the village of Saxam, Bad-suddin's home. The road was good, the bridges we rode across were in good condition, the rivers and üstangs of no great size and fordable throughout the year. Shortly before reaching the village of Moji the road crosses a swampy river bed, Kalabagh üstang, dug in olden times, it is said, by the Kalmuks during their period of power. There is a damp and grassy plain with good pasturage between Moji and Tuma. From Tuma I took the same road as before on my ride from Ujat.

Shortly before reaching Ujat we turned aside to the sandhills to the south to look at the Kohmeri mazar. It lies among high, wild sandheaps that descend abruptly here to the river Qaraqash. The mazar is profusely decorated with all kinds of trophies and is rather impressive in this wild place. Next to it on the other side of a mound is a grotto in the sand and stones. You enter it by a ladder and go on into its four chambers through such small openings that I was not able to squeeze through in my coat. The roof of the grotto is quite black. There is a legend that, when pursued by his enemies, Haji Kohmeri took refuge in this grotto that opened up miraculously during his flight. The entrance was so narrow at that time that he was only able to enter in the shape of a snake. The black colour of the roof is supposed to be due to his enemies' efforts to smoke him out. The people believe that he is still inside the grotto and appears to those who can pray with sufficient fervour. Outside there are a small Mohammedan temple and a couple of shelters for pilgrims. The pilgrims inscribe their names on the walls of the temple.

From Ujat the road crosses a large sandy plateau to another point on the Qaraqash, cutting off a bend of the river. Time was getting on and it was dark before we had crossed the bed of the river that is covered with boulders. Another 40 minutes took us to the house of the Yuzbashi in Langhru, where a room had been heated by my little stove and a welcome »pälaw« awaited us. Langhru is a village of 60—70 houses and 1,500 mou of fields. Opposite it lies a slightly smaller village, Uzun-aral with about as much land. The fields are poor (third category), but the pasturage in the hills allows the inhabitants to keep a good many cattle, about 15 head per house. The population looks fairly prosperous.

From Langhru, which lies between the river Qaraqash and the last spurs of the Qaranghutagh mountains towards the north, we followed a road that creeps along the very foot of the mountains which seemed very beautiful after my long stay in the plains. The ground was sandy, but the horses did not sink deep in spite of the sand being fine. The road is good and even fit for heavy vehicles except in two places, where a little blasting would be necessary. A little to the SW of Langhru, where the Qaraqash begins its bend to the north, the road is so narrow for about 300 paces that a vehicle on wheels could

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Pujiya village*