

A couple of ruined ramparts can be seen between the mound and the village, though they do not seem to be connected with the fortress. Pujiya is a village of 80 houses with 1,500 mou of tilled land.

A long journey to-day. From 8 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. we were on the move incessantly, except the short halts we made for gauging the line of the road. The last hour was so dark that I had to give up my mapping, so that to-morrow I must ride back to the same place. The whole road goes through a desolate district along ravines, dry at this time of the year, which wind among a crowd of sandhills. There is no vegetation excepting a tall bushy plant growing along a small part of the way. Neither was there any sign of animal life, with the exception of the carcasses of a couple of horses. That there were not more is due to this not being a route generally used. The road is good on the whole and fit for vehicles with the exception of some ravines, the steep sides of which require some levelling. The road from Pujiya immediately after crossing the Qaraqash, leads northward along the western river bank that is almost perpendicular at this place. You cross a ravine that would require some work, if vehicles were to be able to pass. After proceeding for about 30 minutes along the bank you come to another ravine with a steep slope. Here the road turns to the west and goes along the bed of the ravine. A depression in the sand with a little water at the bottom indicates that a rapid river is formed here at some seasons. According to our guide the road is impassable for a couple of days after rain in the mountains, which usually occurs twice a month during the spring and summer. We followed the ravine for about 3 hours, the track of water becoming more and more insignificant, until the road turned NW and led us up such a steep sandy slope that it would be difficult for heavy vehicles to mount it. However, it should be possible without the ground being prepared. Once you have reached the top the road keeps on, ascending slightly, in a NW direction. In about half-an-hour it took us across a ravine that also calls for digging. In rather less than another hour we came to a paotai post, a modest one consisting of a few stones marking the boundary between the districts of Khotan and Guma. Here the road turns sharply to the W and begins to lead upwards, but about half-an-hour later it resumes its NW direction. In the SW beyond the nearest hills some snowcapped peaks were visible. The day was cloudy, but hot, and the sand was not too soft for pleasant riding. The road goes up and down over a plain, plentifully bestrewn with knolls on which the low bushy plant I have mentioned grows. It is small and insignificant in itself, but has such large, tree-like roots that the population of these treeless districts digs them up for fuel. About an hour and a half after passing the paotai post we rode down again into a ravine, its name Yapqash jilga proving that it sometimes becomes a river. Soon it debouched into a broader ravine, Sukluk tash, coming from the W and took our road in a wide curve to the west until we reached the Duwa Kishlak plain. In the darkness we could distinguish on the left the faint outlines of steep sandhills, along the foot of which our road passed with a line of trees on the right. The guide and my other Mohammedan companions dismounted and I followed their example. We were at the foot of the Usjma or Duwa mazar with Hodja Abul Kashim's tomb. My companions stopped for a moment,

*December 13th.
Duwa village.*