

Two Lost Inscriptions Relating to the Arab Conquest of Kabul and the North West Region of West Pakistan

by

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The eastern borderland of the Arab Caliphate is ill recorded in history. The early activities find mention in the accounts of Tabari and Al-Baladhuri. But their reference to the local Hindu rulers is vague. They speak of Kabul Shah, a Ratbil and a second Ratbil. The Hindu sources are utterly silent. Dr. R. C. Majumdar attempted a reconstruction of the history from the Hindu angle on the basis of the Arab sources read in the light of the geographical information given by the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang. Off and on number of coins of the Hindu Shahi rulers of Ohind have been published. In the new summary given by Sir Olaf Caroe in "THE PATHANS" the question is again raised about the Kabul Shah and the Hindu Shahi ruler and it is suggested that the latter kingdom was founded in A.D. 870 after Kabul was captured by Yaqub ibn Laith. But as Sir Olaf Caroe admits, the Hindus still continued to hover round Kabul even after this date. In this confusion it is refreshing to get more light on the contemporary scene from two inscriptions which are commented here by Dr. M. A. Ghafur, Superintendent of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, Karachi.

Recently there has been discussion on the first Muslim invasion of the North West Frontier of the sub-continent¹. Dr. Dani has thrown fresh light on this obscure period of the history by editing Tochi Valley inscriptions. He strikes at the root of the problem when he says "early Muslim Conquest of this region still remains to be authenticated. More and more evidence remains to be gathered by a thorough exploration of this region"². The force of his arguments is evident to those who are well acquainted with the original source of history. The systematic dig in the original sources and the evaluation of sources are of prime importance for the historian of this region. Mere speculation on the basis of secondary sources or sheer credulance to source statements without a critical judgement will only darken the dim period of our history.

Two inscriptions, noticed here, are recorded by Abu-al-Walid Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah b. Ahmad al-Azraqi in his famous work *Akhbar Makka*, the

1. For detail see. R.C. Mujmdar, *The Arab invasion of India*, Dacca University Supplement Bulletin No XV; S.Q. Fatimi, First Muslim invasion of the North West Frontier of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Vol. VIII No. 1, 1963. K.A. Rashid, same title, *ibid*, No. 2, 1963.
2. Ahmad Hasan Dani, Tochi Valley Inscriptions in the Peshawar Museum, *Ancient Pakistan* Vol. I, Peshawar 1964 PP. 125-135.

earliest existing book on the history of the city. They bear direct evidence to the Arab Conquest of Kabul and the North West Frontier. The historical data provided by these inscriptions are so original and authentic that they call for serious attention by the historians of the sub-continent.

Wustenfield was the first to edit *Akhbar Makka* with a learned introduction dealing with the biography of the author and the scope of the work as a source of history¹. Historians and Bibliographers such as Ibn-al-Nadim in *Fihrist*, Fasi in his work *al-'Aqd-al-Thamin fi Tarikh al-Balad al-Amin*, al-Hajj Khalifa in *Kashf al-Zunun*, and Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Umar al-Maghribi al-Tunisi in *Kitab Dastur al-A'lam* have noticed Azraqi's *Akhbar Makka* but ascribed different dates to the work. On the basis of internal evidence Wustenfield dates the completion of *Akhbar Makka* to 244H/858². Recently Rushdi al-Salih Mulhasan corrected Wustenfield's in many respects, particularly the text of inscriptions, the subject matter of our present discussion³.

While compiling the history of Makka Azraqi not only recorded the legends and tradition associated with the city but also left us a description of ancient remains in the city. He recorded with fair accuracy all that he observed in Makka. He saw the inscription tablet himself inside the Ka'ba and transcribed the inscription in his book *Akhbar Makka*. Unfortunately Azraqi has not properly described the throne. He simply says that لوح or 'tablet' of the throne was incised with the inscription. In classical Arabic the word لوح signifies *inter alia* a tablet of wood or ivory. The throne may be either of wood or ivory. As to the technique of inscription it appears from the description of Azraqi that it was incised and not carved in relief⁴.

Following is the text of the Ist inscription as recorded by Azraqi:-

نسخه ما في اللوح الذي في جوف الكعبة الذي كان مع السريز

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

امر عبد الله الامام المأمون اميرالمؤمنين اكرمه الله ذا الرياستين الفضل بن سهل بالبعثه بهذا السريز من خراسان الى بيت الله الحرام في سنة مائتين و هو سريز الاصهيد كابل شاه بعد مهراب بنى دومي كابل شاه المحمول تاجه الى مكه المخزون سريزه في بيت مال المسلمين بالمشرق في سنة سبع و تسعين و مائه و من بنا امرالاصهيد انه اضعف عليه الخراج والفديه عن بلاد كابل والقندهار و نصبت المنابر و بنيت المساجد فيها و خرج الاصهيد كابل شاه نازلا عن سريزه هذا خاضعاً لله متلماً حتى حاول حدود كابل و ارض الطخارستان و وضع يده في يد صاحب جبل خراسان ذي الرياستين على ما ساه ذوالرياستين من خطه الذل للدين ولامام المسلمين ثم اقام البريد من القندهار الى الباميان و اضاف بلاد كابل والقندهار الى بلاد خراسان و اذعن للوالي مع الجنود مقيماً حدود الله والاسلام عاملاً باحكامه فيه و في من اختار الاسلام معه و اقام على العهد في ملكته و سيرالامام اكرمه الله الريات الخضر على يدى ذي الرياستين الى القشيمر و في ناحيه التبت ما سيرها فاطهره الله سبحانه على بوخان و راور بلاد بلور صاحب جبل خاقان و جبل

1. For detail see, Azraqi, *Akhbar Makka* edited by Wustenfield, Leipzig, 1858.

2. *Ibid*, P. 10-25.

3. Azraqi, *Akhbar Makka* part I edited by Rushdi al Salih Mulhasan, Matba al Majdiya, Makka, 1352/1933.

4. *Ibid*, P. 149.

التبت و بعث به الى العراق مع فرسان التبت و من ناحيه التريد ما طلب على باراب و شاوغر و زاول و بلاد اطراز و قتل قائد الثغر و سبا اولاد جينغويه الخزلجي مع خاتوناته بعد احجاره اياه ببلاد كيماك و بعد غلبه ما غلب على مدينه كسان و بعث بمفاتيح فلاح فرغانه الى العرب فمن قرا هذه السطور فليعن على تغرالاسلام و تذليل الشركه بقول او فعل فان ذلك واجب على الناس تغرير الدين اذا قامت به الائمة و من اراد الزهد والجهاد و ابواب البر والمعاونه على ما يكسب الاسلام كهذا العزو هذه المفاخر و قد نسخنا ما كان حضر على صفيحه تاج مهرب بنى دومي كابل شاه في سنة سبع و تسعين و مائه على هذا اللوح و من نصر دين الله نصره الله لقوله تبارك و تعالى و لينصرف الله من ينصره ان الله لقوى عزيز -

و كتب الحسن بن سهل صنوذي الرياسين في سنة مائتين -

TRANSLATION:

The text that is (inscribed) on the tablet which was along with the throne (located) inside the Ka'ba.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful and the Gracious.

'Abd Allah, Al-Imam, Al-Mamun, Amir al Muminin (may Allah increase his honour) has ordered Dhu al-Riyasatain-al-Fadal-bin-Sahal to send this throne from Khurasan to Ka'ba, the House of Allah in the year two hundred. This is the throne of Ispahbad Kabul Shah (after ?) Muhrab Bani Dumi, Kabul Shah whose crown was carried to Makka and whose throne was deposited with the Bait al Mal of the Muslim in the East in the year 197. And that Ispahbad was ordered that the *Kharaj* and *Fidya* on account of the cities of Kabul and Qandahar was doubled.

And that the pulpits were set up and the mosques were built in these cities. And Ispahbad Kabul Shah stepped down from this throne as a mark of submission and obedience so that the boundary of Kabul and Tukharistan turned (Muslim possession). And he submitted himself to Dhu-al Riyasatain who turned him away with disgust from the state of humiliation to the faith and the Imam al-Muslimin. Then the postal service was established between Qandahar and Bamiyan. The cities of Kabul and Qandahar were annexed to the kingdom of Khurasan and he (Kabul Shah) became submissive to the the Wali or Governor along with the army establishing statute of Allah and Islam, executing the law of (Allah) in it and among those who accepted Islam with him and stood by the covenant in his kingdom. The Imam (may Allah increase his honour) caused the green flag¹ travel on the hands of Dhu al-Riyasatain in Kashmir and in the areas of Tibet. Allah has made him victorious in Bukhan and Bilor and over the rulers of Jabal Khaqan and Jabal Tibet and he was sent with the cavalry of Tibet to Iraq. From the area of Turbad all that was demanded was *Barab*, *Shawgar*, *Zawal* and the kingdom of *Atraz*. The border leader was killed, the children of *Jabguya* al-Khizlazy along with his wives were taken captive after he was stoned at the city of Kimak. Then he won victory in the city of Kasan and he sent the keys of the forts of Farghana to the Arabs.

1. The Abbasid flag was black. But for sometime Mamun took the green flag for political reason.

Whoever reads these lines, should render assistance for the grandeur of Islam and for the lowering down of disbelief with words or deeds. It is indeed incumbent upon all to gratify the cause of Islam when the Imam stands by it. Whoever seeks renunciation, Jihad and the door of piety and the assistance in all that Islam achieves, lo! this is the might and these are the glories. We have transcribed which was incised on the plates of the crown of Muhrab Bani Dumi Kabul Shah in the year one hundred ninety seven. Allah helps him who helps the faith of Allah as He the Exalted and High said, Allah must help those who help Him. Verily Allah is strong and powerful.”

A systematic commentary on the above will call for the combined efforts of a Turkologist, an Indologist and an Arabist. The present writer therefore proposes to confine the commentary to the part of the inscription which concerns Kabul and North Western areas of Hind-Pakistan sub-continent.

First of all it has to be examined whether the whole text quoted by Azraqi forms part of the inscription. The comparative study of the protocol formula of the official inscription of Mamun's reign and the internal evidence of the quoted text make it clear that while transcribing the text of the inscription, Azraqi interpolated some historical information with a view to throwing light on the text of the inscription. The phrase (ومن بنا) , or 'there is a report' is a clear pointer to that fact. As such the text of the inscription stands as follows:-¹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ - امر عبدالله الامام العامون اميرالمومنين اكرمه الله ذالرياستين الفضل بن سهل بالبعثه بهذا السرير من خراسان الى بيتالله الحرام في سنه مائتين و هو سريرا الاصبهيد كابل شاه بعد مهرب بنى دومي كابل شاه المحمول تاجه الى مكة المعزون سريره في بيت مال المسلمين بالمشرق في سنه سبع و تسعين ومايه و كتب الحسن بن سهل صنوذي الرياستين في سنه مائتين -

The study of the text of the above inscription shows variations in the name of Kabul Shah in different manuscripts of *Akhbar Makka*. Thanks to the editors who recorded the variation, we are in a position to find a clue to the restoration of the correct reading. As copyists were unfamiliar with Sanskrit names, they seemed to have made an Arabic word out of a Sanskrit name. The name occurs as مهرب which means flight or مهرب . Preceding the name, the word بعد was inserted by the copyist to make the word meaningful. In this context مهرب appears to be a transcription error of the word مهراج or emperor. The part of the name which follows it is بنى دومي . If we eliminate the diacritical marks in the words, it admits the reading پتی دومی or پتی دومی (Pathi Dharmi or Pathi Dhami). The correct decipherment of the name is still an open question. We hope Indologists² will come forward to solve it in due course. Another transcriptional blunder is the date portion سبع و تسعين ومايه . Here سبع is a mistake for تسع as the second inscription, which we are going to discuss, bears the correct transcription of the date. As we know, the mistake of سبع for تسع or vice versa is not

1. For English translation see above.

2. The correct restoration of the original Sanskrit name is not possible. But پتی دومی could better be restored as *Pati Deva*. If this is acceptable, in the first word مهرب we may recognise *Spala*, meaning *Spada*, i.e. army. Thus we get the proper word *Spalapati Deva*, Lord of the army, a regal title found in the coins of this period in this region. Again in *Aspahabad* we may recognise *Asvapati*, meaning 'Lord of horseman'. — Editor.

uncommon in Arabic. The historical sequence of events also proves it beyond doubt that it is a transcription mistake.

The inscription gives the following historical information:-

1. The Caliph Mamun ordered his Wazir Fadal b. Sahal to send the throne of Kabul Shah from Khurasan to Ka'ba in the year 200 H/A.D. 815.
2. That the throne was first deposited with the Bait-ul-Mal of the east i.e. Khurasan in the year 199 H/A.D. 814-15.
3. Kabul Shah was defeated by Mamun in the year 199 H/814-15.
4. The crown of Kabul Shah was sent to Ka'ba without being deposited with the Bait-ul-Mal of the east in Khurasan in the year 199H/A.D. 814-15.
5. The inscription was written by Hasan b. Sahal, the brother of the Wazir of Mamun in the year two hundred (A.D. 815-16).

The early conflict of the Arabs with the non-Muslim rulers of Kabul and Zabul need not detain us here¹.

As regards the relation of Mamun with Kabul Shah we know that the Kabul Shah was preparing to invade the border area of Khurasan in A.D. 811² at a time when the unity of the Caliphate was at stake on the issue of succession, and the stage was being set for civil war between Mamun and Amin, the contestants for the Caliphate. Fadal b. Sahal, the Wazir of Mamun, advised Mamun to make peace with Kabul Shah. Political situation compelled Mamun to pacify the Kabul Shah. The military campaign against Kabul Shah was launched in 199/814-15, the year of Mamun's victory over Amin.

The information provided by Azraqi for the purpose of illuminating the text of the inscription is in itself of great historical importance. We have shown that Azraqi completed his work in 244 H/A.D. 858. and as such he was almost contemporary with the reign of Mamun. In this context Azraqi is the earliest historian who has left us information on the history of this region and the information given by him is original and authentic. The significant point contributed by Azraqi is that Kabul Shah was not only converted to Islam but the whole kingdom of Kabul Shah became a part of eastern caliphate during the reign of Mamun. The law of Islam was operative in the kingdom of Kabul Shah. Barid or postal service was established between Qandahar and Bamiyan. The green flag of the Abbasids reached as far as Kashmir³. We know that the kingdom of Kabul Shah extended from Hindu Kush mountains to the Bannu district and included the famous cities of Kabul, Jalalabad and Peshawar⁴. Thus it is clear that the kingdom of Kabul Shah, extending from the frontier of Bamiyan on the west to the river Indus on the east, came under the political subjugation of the Abbasids under Mamun. The invasion of Kashmir as referred to by Azraqi can also be ascertained from

1. For detail, see R. C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*
 2. Bartold, *Turkistan Down to Mongol Invasion* P. 702.
 3. See the Arabic text and translation, above.
 4. R. C. Majumdar, *op. cit.* P. 7.

the Hindu evidences. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* bears reference to Mamun on several occasions. The name Mamun occurs once as having been three times defeated by Lalitaditya who became a legendary figure for his military exploits. Again it is mentioned in connection with King Jayapida¹. Since the chronology of Kalhana is absolutely unreliable and his sources are untraceable, it is quite obvious that the events are generally exaggerated and in some cases misplaced. The only workable method is in these circumstances to establish the chronology of these events with the help of an Arab historian. The evidence borne by Azraqi shows that Mamun launched a military campaign to Kashmir in 199/814-15. If we collate the statement of Kalhana with that of Azraqi we come to the conclusion that the war of Mamun with Kashmir took place during the rule of Lalitapida who was contemporary with Mamun and it was not during the time of Lalitaditya as mentioned by Kalhana. Lalitaditya was ruling over Kashmir by the middle of 8th century A.D. Moreover it appears that there was an alliance between Kabul Shah and the ruler of Kashmir and probably they made a joint front against the Abbasids and perhaps this emboldened the Kabul Shah to invade Khurasan when Mamun was engaged in civil war against his brother Amin. In the context of Azraqi's text Kashmir is used as a denomination of a kingdom. It is quite likely that the Muslim army after defeating the Kabul Shah crossed the upper Indus at certain points and entered into the Panjab which was then a part of the Kashmir kingdom. Mamun's expedition to Kashmir may be taken as a retaliatory measure for the support given by the ruler of Kashmir to Kabul Shah in his aggressive design on Khurasan.

Following is the text of the second inscription as recorded by Azraqi².

نسخه ما كان كتب على صحيفه التاج

بسم الله الرحمان الرحيم

امرالامام المأمون اميرالمؤمنين اكرمه الله بحمل هذا التاج من خراسان و تعليقه في الموضع الذي علق فيه الشرطان في بيت الله الحرام شكر الله عز وجل على الظفر بمن غدر و تجبلا للكعبة اذا استخف بها من نكت و حال عما اكد على نفسه فيها و رجا الامام عظيم الشواب من الله عز وجل بسده الثلعة التي اخترتها المخلوع في الدين فانه قد كان جبرئاً على الغدر والاستخفاف بما اكد في بيت الله عز وجل و حرمة و توخي الامام تذكير من تنفعه الذكرى ليزيدهم به يقينا في دينهم و تعظيما لبيت ربهم تحذيرا لمن استخف و تعدى فانما علقنا هذا التاج بعد غدر المخلوع و اخراجه الشرطين و احراقه اياهما فاخرجه الله من ملكه بالسيف و احرق حلقته بالنار عبرة و عظمة و عقوبة بما كسبت يده و ما الله بظلام للعبيد و بعد عقد الامام المأمون اكرمه الله بخراسان لذي الرياستين الفضل بن سهل و توليته اياه المشرق و بلوغ الراية السوداء بلاد كابل و نهر السند و نصير مهرب بنى دومي كابل شاه سيره و تاجه على يدي ذي الرياستين الي باب الامام المأمون اميرالمؤمنين و اسلام كابل شاه و اهل طاعته على يدي الامام بمر و فامر الامام جزاه الله عن الاسلام والمسلمين خيرائهم من الائمة المهديين ان يدفع السيرير الي خزان بيت مال المسلمين بالمشرق و بعلق

1. Kalhana. *Rajatarangini*, English translation by M.A. Stein, Vol. I, published by Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1961, Book III, 334-5.

2. Azraqi, op. cit. P. 160-61.

التاج في بيت الله الحرام بمكة وبعث به ذوالرياستين و الى الامام على المشرق و مدير خيوله، و صاحب دعوته بعد ما اجتمع المسلمون على طاعه الامام العاؤون اميرالمؤمنين اكرمه الله و وفواله يوفائه بعهد الله و اطاعوه بتمككه بطاعه الله عزوجل و كأنفوه بعمله بكتاب الله و احيائه سنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم و رثوابه من المخلوع لغدره و نكته و تبديله فالحمد لله رب العالمين معز من اطاعه و مذل من عصاه و رافع من وفى و واضع من غدر و صلى الله على محمد النبي و آله و صحبه و سلم ، كتب الحسن بن سهل صنوذى الرياستين فى سنة تسع و تسعين و مائه .

TRANSLATION

The Text which is written on the plate of the Crown.

“In the name of Allah, the Merciful and Gracious. Imam al-Mamun Amir al-Muminin (may Allah increase his honour) ordered to carry this crown from Khurasan and to suspend it in the place where two covenants were hung in the House of Allah, the Mighty and the Great, on the victory against the one who betrayed and as a mark of honour to Ka’ba. He became dishonoured at Ka’ba, who broke the covenant and turned away from that which was taken upon himself. And the Imam expects a great reward from Allah, the Mighty and High, for His stopping the breach which the deposed committed in the faith. Verily he was bold in betrayal and dishonour of what it was affirmed in the House of Allah, the Mighty and High, and in His Haram or the sacred (*Ka’ba*). The Imam preferred to remember (whose remembrance brings in beneficence) as a mark of respect for the House of their Lord and as a warning to those who dishonour and exceed the limit. We have suspended this crown after the betrayal of the deposed who ousted the two covenants and burned them. Allah has ousted him from the kingdom with the sword and caused his place to burn with fire as a warning, example and as consequence of that which he earned. Allah does not do injustice to His creature. Imam al-Mamun (may Allah increase his honour) after having assigned the affairs of Khurasan to Dhu-al-Riyasat al-Fadal b. Sahal and the governorship of the east to him, the black flag being reached in the kingdom of Kabul and the river Indus, Muhrab Bani Dumi’s throne and the crown being surrendered at the threshold of Imam al-Mamun, Amir al-Muminin and having attained the submission of Kabul Shah and his subjects to the Imam at Merv, the Imam (may Allah reward him for his service to Islam and the Muslims) ordered to send the throne to the *Bait al-Mal* of the Muslims in the east and to suspend the crown in the House of Allah, the sacred, at Makka. And it was sent with Dhu al-Riyasat, the *Wali* of the Imam for the east and the Chief of army and the leader of the propagation. It was after that the Muslims united on the obedience to Imam Mamun (may Allah increase his honour) and they fulfilled to him the pledge of Allah and obeyed him on account of his holding fast to the obedience of Allah, the Mighty and High. They followed him on account of his acting according to the Book of Allah and because of his reviving the Sunnah of the prophet. On account of him (the Caliph) they became free of the deposed and his betrayal, breach and alteration. All praises belong to Allah, the Lord of Universe. Honoured is one who obeys Him (Allah) and humiliated is one who disobeys Him. Whoever fulfills (the pledge) became high and whoever betrays became humble. Peace of Allah be on Muhammad the Prophet and his family and his companions.

Hasan b. Sahal, brother of Dhu al-Riyasatayn wrote it in the year one hundred and ninety nine”.

The study of the text shows that Azraqi, copied the inscription as it was found on the plate of the crown. There is no indication of interpolation by the author. The inscription gives us the following historical information:-

1. The crown of Kabul Shah Muhrab Bani Dumi or Maharaj Pathi Dhami was presented to Caliph Mamun by his Wazir Fadal b. Sahal as a mark of victory.
2. Kabul Shah presented himself with his followers to the Caliph Mamun at Merv and accepted Islam in the presence of the Caliph.
3. The black flag of the Abbasids was hoisted in Kabul and the river Indus.
4. Mamun ordered to send the crown of Kabul Shah to Makka and hang it in the Ka'ba at a place where the two covenants (nominating double succession of Amin and Mamun by Harun al-Rashid) were hung and later on Amin destroyed them.
5. By displaying the crown publicly at the sacred Ka'ba, Mamun wanted to focuss his victory on Kabul and the North West Frontier area of the sub-continent as one of his greatest achievements for the cause of Islam and the Muslims.
6. Mamun attached so much importance that his Wazir Fadal b. Sahal was deputed to carry the crown for display at Ka'ba.
7. The inscription was written by Hasan b. Sahal in the year one hundred and ninety nine”.

The mention of نهرالسنده in connection with the defeat of Kabul is noteworthy. The hoisting of black flag at the river Indus as stated in the inscription deserves serious consideration. The lower Indus including Multan was a part of the Islamic kingdom since the early 8th century A.D. It was therefore evident that the army of Mamun crossed the upper Indus at certain points and entered into the Panjab which formed a part of Kashmir kingdom¹.

The inscription on the crown of Kabul Shah executed by the order of Mamun and drafted by Hasan b. Sahal is a document which holds out the political manifesto of Mamun after his final victory in the war of succession with his brother Amin. The two covenants mentioned in the inscription are known in the history as Makkan documents which settled the double succession of Amin and Mamun during the life time of Harun al-Rashid. Amin introduced the name of his son Musa in Ka'ba and as such violated the Makkan documents. Mamun had virtually sovereign control over the eastern half of the Caliphate and made Merv his capital. Armed conflict started in 195/811 and after protracted war it ended in the final victory of Mamun

1. The wording of the inscription does not prove that Mamun's army crossed into the Panjab. Black flag was hoisted on the Indus. Could it not be at Al-Ahwar (modern Lahore in Swabi Tahsil) on the Indus — a place which was earlier occupied by Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah? — Editor.

in 198/September, 813¹. A year later when he was free from all resistance Mamun conducted a large scale military operation against Kabul Shah and his ally, the ruler of Kashmir, and won an unprecedented victory.

He made this victory a prestige issue and found in it a plea to project his case in the nerve centre of Islam the Ka'ba by way of displaying the crown of the defeated non-Muslim king at a place where "Makka Documents" were hung. With full royal protocol the crown was sent to Ka'ba. The significance of such unusual importance to this event can be understood only when we take into view the gathering momentum of non-Islamic forces against the Abbasids. The rulers of Kabul and Kashmir seem to have made a united front against the Muslims. As we have seen, they assumed a threatening attitude to the security of the eastern Caliphate. In this perspective Mamun's victory is indeed a great landmark. Secondly although Mamun won the war of succession he was not liked by the Arabs as he leaned on the support of the Iranians. Probably he wanted to make it an occasion to glorify his services to the cause of Islam and to condemn Amin for violating the agreement settled at Ka'ba and thus win the sympathy of the Arabs.

Finally we may recall here the oft cited Memoir of R.C. Majumdar who concludes:- "The fruitless efforts of half a century (A.D. 649-700) convinced the Arabs that the conquest of these territories was beyond their power. Henceforth they were glad to leave them alone and merely sought to impose some sort of suzerainty upon them. But even this was with difficulty maintained for a very brief period (A.D. 700-14). For the next century and a half, Kabul and Zabul maintained their authority practically unimpaired. The Abbasid Caliphs, no doubt, occasionally exacted some tributes from them, but with the exception of this and occasional raids, Kabul and Zabul were left undisturbed till the former was conquered by Yakub, son of Lais, in A.D. 870".

The study of the two inscriptions of Mamun discussed above have completely demolished the established notion of the historian. The epigraphical evidence and historical information provided by Azraqi prove beyond doubt that the whole kingdom of Kabul Shah was not only overrun by the Muslim army but also became a part of the eastern Caliphate during the rule of the Abbasid Caliph Mamun (813-833 A.D.).

1. For detail see F. Gabrieli, under 'Amin' *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Vol. I. P. 437-38.