

Sukaina Bint Al-Hussein: Oppressed by the Umayyad's, Welcomed By Egypt

> Text and photographs
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Sukaina, the daughter of Al Hussein Ben Ali Ben Abi Taleb, was born in the year 47 Hegira (H). Her mother was Al-Rabab Bint Imria El-Qais Ben Addi Al-Kalbi. Her father named her after his grandmother, Amina, mother of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him) but her mother called her Sukaina, because she brought happiness to the family.



The mosque of Sayyida Sukaina

مسجد السيدة سكينه (رض)

Sukaina was brought up under the guidance of her father Al Hussein. She learned the Koran, traditions of the prophet, and other religious teachings in this holy family. Her mother, Al-Rabab Bint Imria El-Qais, was a great lady, who witnessed the martyrdom of Al-Hussein, on the day of Kerbela, in 60 H. She was taken prisoner with the other members of Ahl Al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet) and then returned with them to Medina. When ▶



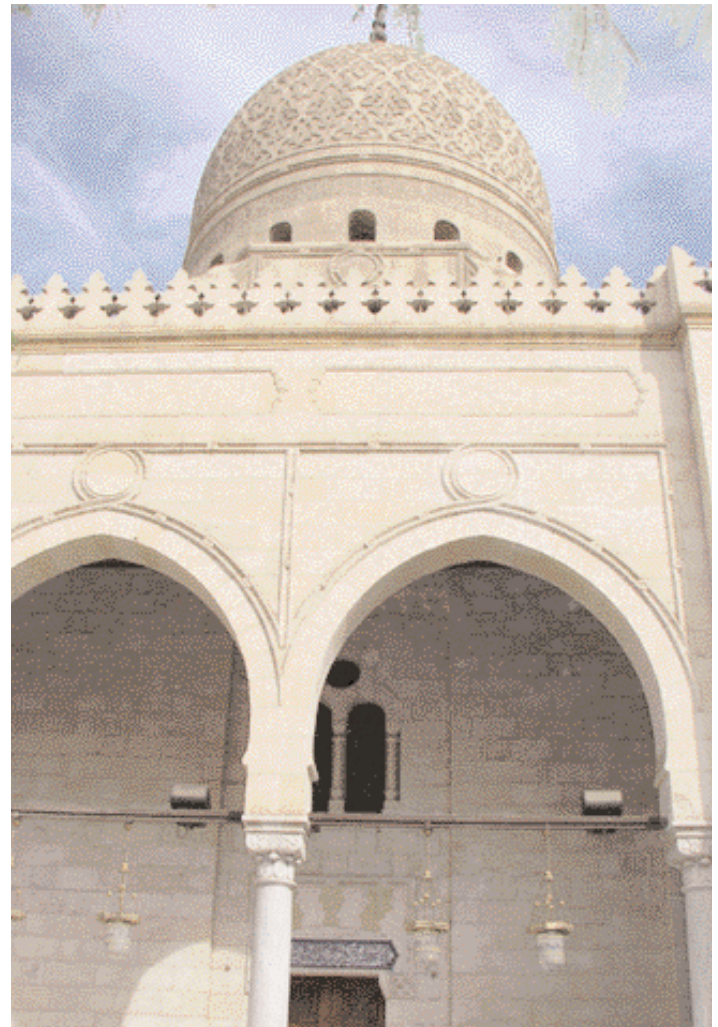
The mosque of Sayyida Sukaina

مسجد السيدة سكينه (رض)



The mosque of Sayyida Sukaina

مسجد السيدة سكينة (رض)



The archway

مرحيطه الأعمدة والأقواس

somebody asked for her hand she said: "I cannot take another father-in-law, after the Prophet". She died a year later broken-hearted at the killing of Al-Hussein.

Sukaina's Arrival in Egypt

One reads in the book "Arab Egypt in History" that after the battle of Kerbela, Ahl Al Bayt became the target of the oppression of the Umayyad Caliphs and their Walis. Some of the family members moved to Egypt where they were welcomed and found quietude and generosity. The country had been saved from the anarchy which prevailed in other regions, because of the nature of its people: simple, patient and strong-willed. The family of the Prophet was loved and Sukaina loved the Egyptians. Sakhawi indicates that the first Alawite (descendent of Imam Ali), from Al-Hussein's

lineage to arrive in Egypt was Sukaina. She accompanied her aunt Sayyida Zainab, after the death of her father, brothers and other family members. Historical records confirm this, among them the writings of Al Obaidi, as well as the Egyptian historians of the 14th century, Ibn Al-Zayyat, and Ibn Zawlaq.

Some historians mention that she planned to marry her cousin Kassem Ben Al Hassan but he was killed with his father before the wedding; she then married Musa'ab Ben Al-Zoubair. Sukaina hardly got over her mourning, following the martyrdom of her father, brothers and cousins in Kerbela when she lost her mother, soon after. Then her husband was killed, after his revolt against Abdul-Malek Ben Marwan. After that, she devoted her time completely to prayer. Ibrahim Ben Abdul-Rahman Al-Zahri asked for her hand,

without success. She married Abdallah Ben Othman Ben Abdallah Ben Hakim Ben Hizam, a man of high morality and had several children. After his death, she married Zayd Ben Amr El Othmani, but the marriage was a failure.

Other Sukainates

Ahl Al-Bayt was accustomed to giving their children the same name because they believed they would benefit from the blessed person who had that name before. This created great confusion, so they added terms like young, middle or older and adopted nicknames such as El Ablaj, Al Mahd, Al-Sadek, Al Moamin or El Mothana. Thus, there was Sukaina Al Kubra (the elder), daughter of Imam Al Hussein, who had a sister named Sukaina Assughra (the younger one), who resembled her in ▶



Inside the mosque

المسجد من الداخل



The mausoleum

الضريح

physique and knowledge. In the same way, Ali Zine El Abidine Ben Al Hussein, had two girls, Sukaina Al Kubra, who is buried in Sham (Syria). Certain historians confused between Sukaina Al Kubra, Al Husein's daughter and Sukaina Assughra, who, according to reliable sources, died in Egypt without marrying.

It is well known that the houses where Ahl Al Bayt resided were transformed into mausoleums or mosques after their death. It is probable that Sukaina Bint Al Hussein returned to the Hejaz, after the death of her aunt, Sayyida Zaynab, in the year 62 H. As Abu Al-Faraj Al-Asfahani indicates in his book Al-Aghani and the History of Ibn Khalkan, Sukaina Al Kubra died in Medina in 117 H.

Various accounts

There are conflicting accounts about the burials of saints for whom mausoleums were built. This is due to the absence of reliable texts and signs. Documentation in the first two centuries of Islam, an eventful period, was not an established tradition. There are also political reasons for the discrepancies. The Hashemites were subjected to a campaign of denigration and slandering by the Umayyads, so that people

did not rally round them to claim their rights. In later centuries, in particular during times of crises and wars, people sought the blessings of saints by visiting the mausoleums of Ahl Al Bayt.

The phenomenon of the "The vision of mausoleums" emerged. People dreamt of a saint and built a mosque or a mausoleum on his behalf. According to Nour Al Absar", Tabakat Al-Sha'arani and Tabakat Al-Monadi, Sukaina Al Kubra, was buried in Egypt. But Al-Sakhaoui in his book Tuhfat Al-Ahbab affirmed that Sukaina, who is buried in Egypt in Al Khalifa district, close to the mosque of Sayyida Nafissa in Cairo, is the cousin of Imam Ali Zine El Abidine and not Sukaina Al Kubra who is buried in the Hejaz.

The mosque and its new extension

Ali Moubarek indicated in his book that the mosque was built in Al Khalifa district in El Maragha, on the street bearing his name. A mosque founded by the Emir Abdul-Rahman Katekhda in 1174H was subsequently added and restored by Abbas Pasha. It has three doors beside an ablution room. The doors bear the inscriptions: "Holy place of the daughter of Hussein, Sukainan - all noble qualities are hers" and

"Oh, Al-Taha, this is a mosque dedicated to the sun of the guidance of righteousness, daughter of Hussein, Sukaina" The inscription on the third door reads: "Your appearance, daughter of Hussein, is like the Arch of the Convent.

The mosque comprises of six marble columns, a noble wooden minbar and a step. It is equipped with two rooms where the servants reside. Beside the dome, is a grid surrounding the sanctuary of Sukaina, on which one finds a wooden case, inside a large copper closet, with beautiful, illuminated forms, created by the Khedive Abbas, who succeeded to the throne after Mohamed Ali Bek Al Kabir, in 1266 H (1849). He restored the mosque which is surrounded by a beautiful dome supported by four marble columns. These were restored during the reign of the Khedive Abbas Hilmi II, who added a small room for the reciters of the Koran. It bears the inscription: "Mercy of God and his blessing on you Ahl Al Bayt".

Before the reign of the Khedive Abbas II, the mausoleum of Sukaina was below ground level. It was subsequently raised to the level of the mosque and surrounded by a copper closet resembling that of the mausoleum of Sayyida Nafissa. The ▶



Celebration of Sayyida Sukaina

احتفالات بذكرى ولادة السيدة سكينة (رض)

Khedive Abbas II also restored this mausoleum and mosque.

The Endowment Ministry rebuilt and widened Sayyida Sukaina's mosque in 1322 H (1904). The restoration and extension work, which began two years ago, is now complete. The area of the old mosque was about 900 m², including 400 m² for the esplanade. Its extension added 550 m², including places for ablutions and a prayer room. The floor, the columns, the decorations, glass work, gypsum nettings and the ceiling were restored and the minaret was cleaned. Cloakrooms and places of ablution for men and women were added. The interior decorations were cleaned and renewed.

Celebrating Sayyida Sukaina's birthday

Since the Egyptians believe that Sayyida Sukaina is buried here, many of the followers of Ahl Al Bayt come to visit her in this mausoleum, carry out their religious rites and celebrate her birthday for three weeks. The birthday comes shortly before



Night view

منظر ليلي



The birthday of Sayyida Sukaina

احتفالات بذكرى ولادة السيدة سكينة (رض)

that of Sayyida Nafissa, in Jamada Al-Awla, and is celebrated in this month each year. Whatever the truth about the place of Sayyida Sukaina's burial, we find ourselves

facing a mosque of splendid beauty, attended by people who carry out their religious obligations, praying to God, requesting his blessings. ■