

Tombstones of Al-Subei'i Family in Zawyet Sultan in Minia

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Abstract:-

This paper deals with a collection of al-Subei'i family tombstones in Zawyet Sultan cemetery due to their importance in identifying their owners' names, titles and dates of death. It also aims to identify some of the inscriptions contained in these tombstones. The researcher adopts the descriptive analytical methodology and he concludes some important results including: - Numerating the collection of inscriptions on these tombstones, the reference to the types of calligraphies and titles engraved on these tombstones.

Key words :- (mausoleum- tombstone- death- grave- Zawyet).

Introduction to Zawyet el-Amwat (Zawyet Sultan): -

Zawyet Sultan or Zawyet el-Amwat locates on the east bank of the Nile near the city of Minya; a well-known province, which is called al-Koum al-Ahmar, had also some monuments dated back to the Old Kingdom era, including a pyramid base and some Pharaonic tombs to the rulers, their advisers and notables of the province. The monks used these graves as places of residence and worship and this can be seen clearly from the remains of black carbon resulting from the lampstands within the tombs as well as the remaining dyes and inks on the walls. There are also some remains of Hebenu city which was at one time the capital of a Nome whose symbol was the oryx (¹).

In this province, especially to the north of the Pharaonic monuments, some Roman relics can be seen, namely the fence separating the Pharaonic monuments from Zawyet el-Amwat. It seems that this wall was a wall of a Roman fort because that area was a military zone in the past.

¹-Abd Alhamid zayid: Athar Al Mania Alkhalidah, Al Hayya Alaqlimia litnshit Alsayha bi ElMinia, 1960, p.18.

This is evidenced by the presence of a watch-tower or the so-called (al-Nazzara) ⁽²⁾ on top of the mountain. Many stone-cut coffins were found in the streets among the cemeteries. These were dated back to the Pharaonic and Ptolemaic eras. People used them to put water and fodder for their own livestock.

The remains of the Roman city can be seen in the wells remaining from the Roman era. This indicates that Zawyet el-Amwat was a Pharaonic city that lasted until the Coptic era and the Romans used it as a military zone. Therefore, they dug wells inside their fences to be used for drinking during the siege and in case of the Nile waters recession. It is astonishing to see the way of digging these wells that made them remain throughout ages and contain pure water that the residents used for drinking. They were dug at depths that one can't see their bottoms. They were lined with burnt bricks (red bricks) in a magnificent manner of stacking and construction. The presence of these wells in that region was an incentive to the monks to stay there, as they managed to come down from the heights of mountain and the desert to get their needs of water for themselves and their Fathers⁽³⁾.

Tombstones:-

Islamic Egypt is characterized by the abundance of the discovered tombstones, i.e., the slabs of different types of stones and marble placed over the grave to indicate the deceased. There was unanimous agreement between fuqahaa and jurists upon the hatred of constructing graves, decorating them or writing upon them. However, some did not abide by this and there was evident increasing care for these tombstones, which included Basmalah, a brief synopsis of the deceased, a tribute to the remembrance of Allah and exultation to His prophet, some phrases of unification such as the Two Testimonies and the date of death. As for the Coptic tombstones, the Coptic artist was also interested in mentioning some religious statements at the beginning of the tombstone and he concluded with prayers statements for the deceased. In memoriam of the

² - Abd Alhamid zayid: Athar Al Mania Alkhalidah, Al Hayya Alaqlimia litnshit Alsayha bi ElMinia, p.22.

³Mustafa Abd Allah shayhai, Dirasa Tarikhia Wa'athria Lashawahid Alqubur Alislamiya, AlQahira, maktab Aljamiea lilttaba, 1984, p55.

deceased, the Coptic tombstone included also the name, date of birth and death, the works of the deceased throughout life (⁴).

The Importance and Motives to Choose the Subject: -

1. Highlighting the main value of these tombstones and their artistic and aesthetic decorative value.
3. Identifying information about the various names, countries and titles inscribed on the tombstones.
4. Studying these tombstones provides valuable information about the history of these deceased individuals, the aspects of their lives and the dates of their death.
5. Identifying some invocatory and memorial phrases presented in these tombstones.
6. Identifying the various types of inscriptions used in these tombstones.
- 7- Highlighting the archaeological importance of Zawyet Sultan cemetery and its graves.
8. Referring to the raw materials that used in building of these tombstones and methods of their implementation.

Research Methodology:-

The research adopts the descriptive analytical methodology as the researcher carries out a descriptive and analytical study of a selected sample of the tombstones in Zawyet Sultan cemetery, namely those of al-Subei'i Family, in order to identify the artistic and aesthetic features of their calligraphy and decoration. The researcher will describe, read and analyze them technically by tracing the techniques calligraphy, decoration and aesthetic values worthy of study. This approach is common in researches and studies based on studying a certain phenomenon.

The descriptive approach is also known as a set of research procedures that are integrated to describe the phenomenon or topic depending on the facts and data collection and their scientific accurate classification, procession and analysis, so as to extract their meaning and reach results or generalizations on the phenomenon or subject matter under investigation.

⁴ Hassan Albasha, Ahammiat Shawahid Alqubur bi wasfiha msdaran litarikh Aljazeera Alearabiat fi Alathr Alislamiya dimn kitab Tarikh Masadir Tarikh Aljazeera Alarabi, 1st edition, 1979A.D, p.166.

Brief Background of al-Subei'i Family: -

The al-Subei'i Family is one of the well-known families that originated in Minya Governorate and invested their money in agriculture and trade. They were like other feudal families of Minya (Pashas and Beys) possessing vast areas of agricultural lands. Most of these were concentrated in the village of Bani Ahmad, at the Minya directorate, Minya governorate. The Survey Authority still calls an area of the Eastern borders of Bani Ahmad village as Hawd al-Subei' (or Basin of al-Subei'), as shown on the survey map implemented in 1952 at a scale of 1: 500. These properties were inherited by three of al-Subei's sons, namely Haj Ismail al-Subei', Haj Mohammad al-Subei' and Ali Bey al-Subei' who were born in Minya and set up al-Subei' Palace with their father in 1890 AD. This palace locates currently in al-madrasa al-thanaweya Street intersecting with al-Fouly Mosque Street. Minya Security Directorate used it as a rest-house for the notable visitors. Haj Ismail died on Tuesday, the 16th of Jamada II 1342 AH, corresponding to January 22, 1924 AD. Ali Bey al-Subei' was the father of Haj Tulba Ali al-Subei' and Haj Sayyed Ali al-Subei'. The latter had a son called Tawfiq, who died on Saturday 22 Rajab 1341 AH corresponding to March 10, 1923 AD (⁵).

As for Haj Tulba al-Subei', he was the father of Mahmoud Bey Tulba and Huda Tulba Ali al-Subei' who died in the same year and month but within eighteen days as Mahmoud Bey died on Wednesday 29 Jamada I 1346 AH, corresponding to November 23, 1927 AD and Huda Tulba died on Saturday, 11 Jumada I 1346 AH, corresponding to November 5, 1927 AD. Mahmoud Bey Tulba Ali al-Subei' played a prominent national role in the 1919 Revolution. He also had a good relationship with the family of Sultan Pasha located near al-Lamti Mosque, because of the nature of the work of Sultan Pasha, as he the Ministry of Agriculture entrusted him to oversee the lands of Upper Egypt and collect the due taxes on their landlords(⁶).

Descriptive Study of these Tombstones:-

This paper is concerned with an aesthetic and artistic study of seven tombstones of al-Subei'. They locate in the family's graveyard in Zawyet el-Amwat village in Minya governorate, these tombstones are sorted according to the date of death as follows:-

⁵ This information's were collected from ancestors of the family who lived in Minia city.

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- Tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik (1302 AH).
- Tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei' (1331 AH-1913 AD).
- Tombstone of Mohammed al-Subei' and his Brothers_(1341 AH – 1923 AD).
- Tombstone of Fatima the daughter of Mohammed Othman (1345 AH).
- Tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei' (1346 AH - 1927 AD).
- Tombstone of Huda Tulba al-Subei' (1346 AH – 1927 AD).
- Tombstone of Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah (1349 AH – 1930 AD).

First: Tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik (pl.1): -

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family in Zawyet el-Amwat, known as Zawyet Sultan to the East of Minya governorate.

Raw material: - marble.

Kind of script: Nasta'liq

Lines: 8 lines.

Date of death:-1302A.H-1312A.H.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هو الباقي	Howal Baqi
Second Line	هذا قبر الست مستملك	Haza Qabr al-Sett Mestamlik
Third Line	حرم المرحوم سيد أفندي علي	Haram almarhoum Sayyed Effendi Ali
Fourth Line	توفيت سنة 1302	Twofeyat sanat 1302
Fifth Line	وكريمتها الست هانم	Wakaremateha al-sett hanim
Sixth Line	كريمة المرحوم سيد أفندي علي	Karimat almarhoum Sayyed Effendi Ali
Seventh Line	توفيت سنة 1312	Twofeyat sanat 1312
Eighth Line	الى روحها الفاتحه	Ela rawheha al-Fatiha

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	The Everlasting
Second Line	This is the tomb of <u>al-Sett Mestamlik</u>
Third Line	The spouse of Sayyed Effendi Ali
Fourth Line	Died in 1302
Fifth Line	And her daughter al-sett Hanim
Sixth Line	The daughter of the Late Sayyed Effendi Ali
Seventh Line	Died in 1312
Eighth Line	The Fatiha to her soul

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab that its upper part ends with a square upright shaft that includes eight lines. The last line is devastated and it is written in a gilded relief of Nasta'liq script on a marble base. The lines are separated with straight relief gilded lines, but the headstone has no decorations.

Second: - The Tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei' (pl.2-fig4): -

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family.

Raw material:- limestone.

Kind of script: Nasta'liq

Lines: 10 lines.

Date of death:-1331A.H-1913A.H.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هو الحي الباقي	How al Hayyu al-Baqi
Second Line	هذا قبر المغفور	Haza qabr al-maghfour
Third Line	له الحاج طلبية	Lahu al-haj Tulba
Fourth Line	علي السبيع.	Ali Al-Subeic
Fifth Line	المتوفى إلي رحمة	Al-mutawaffa ila rahmat
Sixth Line	الله تعالى في يوم.	Allahu ta'ala fe youm
Seventh Line	الأربعاء 25 ربيع	Al-arba'aa 25 rabee'
Eighth Line	الثاني سنة 1331	Al-thani sanat 1331
Ninth Line	إبريل 1913 سنة ميلادية	April 1931 sana meladeya
Tenth Line	إلي روحه الفاتحة	Ila ruhoh al-Fatiha

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	He is The Ever-Living, The Everlasting
Second Line	This is the tomb of the forgiven
Third Line	Haj Tulba
Fourth Line	Ali al-Subei'
Fifth Line	Who passed away to the mercy of
Sixth Line	Allah Almighty on
Seventh Line	Wednesday, 25 of Rabia
Eighth Line	II 1331
Ninth Line	April 1913 AD
Tenth Line	The Fatiha to his soul

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab that its upper part ends with a rectangular shaft. It includes ten lines, written in Nasta'liq script on a green background. It has no decorations.

Thirdly: - The Tombstone of Mohammed al-Subei' and his Brothers (pl.3-fig3):-

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family.

Raw material: - Marble.

Kind of script: Nasta'liq

Lines: 9 lines.

Date of death:-1341A.H 1923A.D -1342A.H1924A.D.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هذا قبر المرحومين	Haza qabr almarhomain
Second Line	المرحوم توفيق المرحوم الحاج	Almarhom alhaj – Almarhom Tawfiq
Third Line	محمد السبيع سيد علي السبيع	Mohammed al-Subei' - Sayyed Ali al-Subei'
Fourth Line	واخيه الحاج المتوفي يوم	Wa akhih alhaj – almotawaffa youm
Fifth Line	إسماعيل السبيع السبت 22 رجب	Ismail al-Subei' - assabt 22 Rajab
Sixth Line	المتوفي يوم الثلاثاء سنة 1341 موافق	almotawaffa youm athoulathaa' – 1341 – mowafiq
Seventh Line	16 جماد الثاني 10 مارس	16 Jamada Althani – 10 Mares
Eighth Line	سنة 1342 موافق سنة 1923	Sanat 1342 - mowafiq sanat 1923
Ninth Line	22 يناير سنة 1924	22 Yanayer sanat 1924

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	This is the grave of the two late
Second Line	The late Haj the late Tawfiq
Third Line	Mohammed al-Subei' Sayyed Ali al-Subei'
Fourth Line	And his Haj brother died on
Fifth Line	Ismail al-Subei' Saturday 22 Rajab
Sixth Line	Died on Tuesday 1341 – corresponding to
Seventh Line	16 Jamada II 10 March
Eighth Line	On 1342 corresponding to
Ninth Line	22 January 1924

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab. It has nine lines, the first eight of which consist of two parts written in relief Nasta'liq script on a marble base. A relief straight line separates each couple of them. The tombstone has no decorations.

Fourth: The Tombstone of al-Sett Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed Othman (pl.4-fig.1):-

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family.

Raw material: - Marble.

Kind of script: Nasta'liq

Lines: 5 lines.

Date of death:-1345A.H.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هذا قبر المرحومة	Haza qabr almarhouma
Second Line	الست فاطمة	al-Sett Fatima
Third Line	بنت محمد عثمان	Bent Mohammed Othman
Fourth Line	توفيت يوم 26	Towofeyat youm 26
Fifth Line	ربيع أول سنة 1345	Rabii' awal sanat 1345

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	This is the grave of the late
Second Line	Lady Fatima
Third Line	the daughter of Mohammed Othman
Fourth Line	Who died on 26
Fifth Line	Of Rabi I 1345 AH.

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab that its upper part ends with a rectangular upright shaft above which five lines are inscribed in a gilded relief of Nasta'liq script. A relief straight line separates each couple of lines. The scripted lines occupy nearly the total area of the tombstone. The headstone has no decorations at all.

Fifth: - Tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba (pl.5):-

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family.

Raw material:- Marble.

Kind of script: Nasta'liq

Lines: 7 lines.

Date of death:-1346A.H-1927A.H.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هو الحي الباقي	Howal Hayyu al-Baqi
Second Line	هذا قبر المغفور له محمود	Haza qabr al-maghfour Lahu Mahmood
Third Line	بك طلبه السبيع توفي	Bey Tulba al-Subei' Towaffa
Fourth Line	إلى رحمة الله تعالى يوم	ila rahmat Allah Ta'ala youm
Fifth Line	أربعاء 29 جماد أول.	Arba'aa 29 Jumad awal
	سنة 1346 الموافق 23	Sanat 1346 almuwafiq 23
	نوفمبر سنة 1927 إلى روحه الفاطحة	November sanat 1927 Ila ruhoh al-Fatiha

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	He is The Ever-Living, The Everlasting
Second Line	This is the tomb of the forgiven Mahmood
Third Line	Bey Tulba al-Subei, who passed away
Fourth Line	to the mercy of Allah Almighty on
Fifth Line	Wednesday 29 Jamada I
Sixth Line	1346, corresponding to 23
Seventh Line	November 1927, The Fatiha to his soul

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab that its upper part ends with a rectangular upright shaft. It includes seven lines inscribed in a gilded relief of Nasta'liq script on a marble base. a straight relief of gilded line separates each couple of lines.

Sixth: - Tombstone of Huda Tulba al-Subei' (pl.6-fig2)

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family.

Raw material:-Marble.

Kind of script: Nastalig

Lines: 7 lines.

Date of death:-1346A.H-1927A.H.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هو الحي الباقي	Howal Hayyu al-Baqi
Second Line	هذا قبر المرحومة هدى	Haza qabr al-marhouma Huda
Third Line	طلبة السبيع توفيت	Tulba al-Subei' Towofeyat
Fourth Line	إلى رحمة مولاهم يوم	ila rahmat mawlaha youm
Fifth Line	السبت 11 جماد أول	Assabt 11 Jumad awal
Sixth Line	سنة 1346 الموافق 5	Sanat 1346 almuwafiq 5
Seventh	نوفمبر سنة 1927 م	November sanat 1927

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	He is The Ever-Living, The Everlasting
Second Line	This is the tomb of the forgiven Huda
Third Line	Tulba al-Subei', who passed away
Fourth Line	to the mercy of her Lord on
Fifth Line	Saturday 11 Jamada I
Sixth Line	1346, corresponding to 5
Seventh Line	November 1927 AD

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab with a square upper shaft. It includes seven lines inscribed in a gilded relief of Nasta'liq script on a marble base. A straight relief of gilded line separates each couple of lines. The headstone has no decorations at all.

Seventh: - Tombstone of Al-sett Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah(pl.7)

Location: the graveyard of al-Subei' family.

Raw material:- Marble.

Kind of script: Thuluth.

Lines: 6 lines.

Date of death:-1349A.H-1930A.H.

References: - published for the first time.

It reads as follows:-

	In Arabic	Transliteration
First Line	هذا قبر المرحومة الست	Haza qabr al-marhouma al-Sett
Second Line	هانم إبراهيم فظلة	Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah
Third Line	توفيت إلي رحمة مولاها	Towofeyat ila rahmat mawlaha
Fourth Line	يوم الجمعة 6 ربيع الأول	youm aljuma 6 rabii' al-awal
Fifth Line	سنة 1349 الموافق أول أغسطس	Sanat 1349 almuwafiq awal Augustus
Sixth Line	سنة 1930	Sanat 1930

These translate as follows:-

	In English
First Line	This is the tomb of the forgiven al-Sett
Second Line	Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah
Third Line	who passed away to the mercy of her Lord
Fourth Line	on Friday 6 Rabi I
Fifth Line	1349 corresponding to the first of August
Sixth Line	1930

Description of the Tombstone: -

The tombstone appears in the form of a rectangular slab that its upper part ends with a rectangular upright shaft. It includes six lines inscribed in a Thuluth script on a marble base. A straight relief of gilded line separates each couple of lines. The headstone has no decorations at all.

Analytical study: -

Some tombstones of Tulba al-Subei' family in Zawyet al-Amwat in Minya include some phrases of praising God Almighty such as the Everlasting(as pl.2,pl.3,pl.4,pl.5), There are also some provocative phrases, records to the date of death as well as some titles.

First: The Phrases of Glorifying Allah Almighty⁽⁷⁾: -

The first line in some tombstones begins with “هو الحي الباقي” Howal Hayyu al-Baqi” which means “He is The Ever-Living, The Everlasting” such as the tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei', Ibrahim Bey Khalifa, Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei' and Huda Tulba al-Subei', whereas the phrase of “هو الباقي, Howal al-Baqi” which means “He is The Everlasting” is inscribed on the tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik.

Second, Supplication Phrases: -

Some tombstones of al-Subei's family include some supplication Phrases in supplication to God to ask for His mercy, pardon and forgiveness. They are in forms that suit the character of the deceased.

- “إلى رحمة الله تعالى, **ila rahmat Allah Ta'ala**” which means “To the Mercy of God Almighty” on the tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei' and Tulba Ali al-Subei'.
- “إلى رحمة مولاهـا” **ila rahmat mawlaha**” which means “To the Mercy of her Lord” on the tombstone of Huda Tulba al-Subei' and al-Sett Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah.
- “المغفور له :**al-maghfour Lahu**” which means the forgiven, on the tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei' and Tulba Ali al-Subei'.
- “إلى روحه الفاتحه” **Ila ruhoh al-Fatiha**” which means “the Fatiha to his soul” as stated on the tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei'.

The tombstone of Abdul Rahman al-Hajari” dated back to 31 AH / 651 AD and preserved at the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo is the oldest tombstone with provocative phrases asking God for mercy such as “اللهم أغفر له, أستغفر له” Allahumma Ighfer lahu: Istaghfer lahu” which means "O Allah, forgive him, Ask God for forgiveness for him” (⁸).

⁷ Mohammed Hamza Ismail al-Haddad, "Qarafet al-Qahira fe Asr al-Salatin al-Mamalik "Derasah Hadareya Athareya",p.133.

⁸ Hassan Albasha, Ahammiat Shawahid Alqubur bi Wasfiha Msadaran Litarikh Aljazeera Alearabiat fi Alathr Alislamiya dimn kitab Tarikh Masadir Tarikh Aljazeera Alarabi, 1st edition, 1979A.D, p.166.

Third: Means of Recording the Date of Death: -

Numerous types of calendars are used to record the date of the tombstones of al-Subei's family. Examining these dates, it can be noted that there are no dates in Coptic calendar⁽⁹⁾, but they inscribed the Hijri⁽¹⁰⁾ or Gregorian months⁽¹¹⁾. In addition, the first to use Gregorian calendar in the official divans was Khedive Ismail in the first of January, 1876 instead of the Coptic calendar that was used in some businesses of correspondence and agriculture. The Gregorian calendar was also used in some archaeological inscriptions and the tombstone of Ali Pasha is the oldest and first to have the Gregorian calendar in the Egyptian architecture⁽¹²⁾. It had inscriptions like: Saturday, Rabi' II 1310 corresponding to 29 October 1892 AD.

The dates of death are also inscribed on the tombstones in three forms as follows: -

First Form: The Hijri Calendar in Arabic Figures only: -

As the Hijri dates are written in Arabic figures with reference to the designation of the month and year as in the tombstone of "Fatima Bent Mohamed Othman", i.e., (26 ربيع أول سنة 1345), (26 Rabi' I of 1345 AH).

Second Form: Combining of Hijri calendar and Gregorian calendar with Arabic figures: -

Most tombstones of al-Subei's family are a combination of Hijri and Gregorian calendars with Arabic figures and reference to the day of death (Saturday, Sunday, Monday, etc.) In addition, the date includes the denomination of the day, month and year. For example: -

- Tombstone "Tulba Ali al-Subei'" took the form (الأربعاء 25 ربيع الثاني سنة) الأربعة
1913 ميلادية / 2 إبريل 1331: Wednesday 25 Rabi' II of 1331 AH/ 2nd of April 1913 AD).

⁹ Coptic months : Baba - Hatour - kahik - Tuba - Amshir - Biramhat - Bermuda - Bishins - Biuwuna – Abib-Msryi.

¹⁰ Arabic months : Almuhammad - Safar - Rabiaa Alawl - Rabiaa Althani - Jamad Alawl - Jamad Althani - Rajab - shaaban - Ramadan - shawl - Zhu Al-Qaida - Zhu Alhaja.

¹¹ Al'afrajjia Months: January – February - March - April - Mai - June - July - August - September - October - November - December.

¹² Mustafa Barakat, Alniqush Alkitabia Ala Aamair madinat alQahira fi Alkarn Alttasia Ashar, Dirasa fania Atharia, unpublished PhD thesis, Archeology faculty, Cairo University, 1991A.D, p.256.

- Tombstone of "Mohammed al-Subei', Ismail al-Subei', Tawfiq Sayyed Ali" took the form (يوم الثلاثاء 16 جماد الثاني سنة 1342 / 22 يناير 1924, يوم السبت 10 مارس سنة 1923 / 22 رجب سنة 1341 / Tuesday, 16 Jamada II 1342 AH/22 January 1924 AD, on Saturday, 22 Rajab 1341/10 March 1923).

- Tombstone of "al-Sett Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah" took the form (يوم الجمعة 6 ربيع الأول سنة 1349 : Friday 6 Rabi' I 1349 AH/ the first of August 1930 AD).

- Tombstone of "Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei'" took the form (يوم الأربعاء 29 جماد أول سنة 1346 / 23 نوفمبر سنة 1927 :Wednesday, 29 Jamada I 1346 AH/23 November, 1927 AD).

- Tombstone of "Huda Tulba al-Subei'" took the form (يوم السبت 11 جماد أول سنة 1346 : Saturday 11 Jumada I 1346 AH/5 November, 1927 AD).

Third Form: Combination of the Hijri Calendar and the Gregorian year only: -

As the Hijri and Gregorian dates were mentioned only with the year without mentioning the day or month of death on the tombstone of "al-Sett Mestamlik" in the form (سنة 1302 / سنة 1312 : In the year of 1302 / 1312).

Fourth: The titles inscribed on the Tombstones: -

The title was then used in the position of epithets to praise ⁽¹³⁾. It was frequently used in this sense, as the author of "al-Madkhal" said - perhaps he was a Maliki - that it was a banned innovation due to the extravagance in titles and description of man⁽¹⁴⁾.

The tombstones of al-Subei's family also included some honorary titles like Bey, Haj, Effendi for men and al-Sett and Karimat for women as well as other titles such as al-Marhoum for the dead.

¹³ Hassan Albasha, Al-Alqab Al-Islameya Fe al-Tarikh wal Watha'iq wal Athaar, Dar al-Nahda al-Arabeya, Cairo, 1989AD, p.112.

¹⁴ Mustafa barkat, Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Al-Othmania dirasa fi Tatawur Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Monzo Alfath Alothmani li Misr hata Algha Al-Khalifa Alothmaniya (mn khilal Alathr wal Watha'iq wal makhtutat) 1517 - 1924, Dar Ghareeb edition, 1st edition, 2000A.D, p. 11.

Honorary Titles: -

Bey: “بک”:-

The word entered English from Turkish “bey”, itself derived from Old Turkic “beg” which - in the form “bäg”(15). It is usually considered a borrowing from the Persian language and means the sage, sacred or leader. The Mongols and Turkmen used it as an honorary title and it equals in its meaning the Arabic word “Amir – أمير”. it was first dubbed on Tughril Bey, the founder of Seljuk dynasty in 450 AH / 1058 AD, then its use expanded to include princes and Sanjaks in the Ottoman period to those who were lower in rank than Pasha. This title was added to the rank of its bearer such as “Sanjak Bey”(16).

In the late Ottoman era, the Sultan granted it to the sons of those having the title of “Pasha” and military men holding the rank of Mayor but with the downfall of the Ottoman Empire, its Ottoman official sense faded away in the Arab countries. However, it was frequently used by the commons when addressing those occupying prominent positions as a civilian title of respect and veneration (17). This title was inscribed on the tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei’.

Haj or الحاج: -

It was one of the titles of state majors in its meaning, even if he was not a pilgrim and did not undertake the holy journey of pilgrimage to al-Masjid al-Ḥarām. So, it was dubbed on them just like those who made pilgrimage to al-Masjid al-Ḥarām(18). This is an honorary title that many are keen on getting after the performance of the Hajj as it bestows veneration, reverence and respect of people upon its holder for performing the fifth pillar of Islam, namely the Hajj to Mecca(19).

This title was inscribed on the tombstones of Tulba Ali al-Subei’, Mohamed al-Subei’, Ismail al-Subei’, Tawfiq Sayyed Ali.

15 Hassan Albasha, Al-Alqab Al-Islameya Fe al-Tarikh wal Watha'iq wal Athaar, Dar al-Nahda al-Arabeya, p.115.

16 Mustafa Abd Alkarim, Moajam Al-Mustalahat wal' Alqab Altarikhia, Mawswat Alrisala, 1st edition, Beirut, 1996A.D, p. 83.

17 Mustafa barkat, Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Al-Othmania dirasa fi Tatawur Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Monzo Alfath Alothmani li Misr hata Algha Al-Khalifa Alothmaniya,p119.

18 Hassan Albasha, Al-Funoon Al-Islameya wal Waza'if ala al-Athaar al-Arabeya", Part 2, Dar al-Nahda al-Arabeya, Cairo, 1966, p.255.

19 Mustafa barkat, Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Al-Othmania dirasa fi Tatawur Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Monzo Alfath Alothmani li Misr hata Algha Al-Khalifa Alothmaniya,p123.

Effendi أفندي :-

A Greek term entered Turkish language with interpolation. It means the master. It was used on a large scale in the Ottoman era between the intellects class as a title of honor as it was dubbed on the holders of important positions such as physicians, Sheikhs of Islam and sons of the sultans and the like. Its use was also common in Egypt during the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha and his successors and people also used to call the Khedive as Effendi⁽²⁰⁾. This expression is still a colloquial term used by the commons in the Levant. It was inscribed on the tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik.

Titles of Women: -

الست: Al-Sett (The Lady): -

A general title called on women as a part of the composite titles like “sett al-settat or the bet of ladies”⁽²¹⁾. This title was inscribed on the Egyptian tombs during the thirteenth century of Hijira or the 19th century AD. Aisha Hanim is considered the first to be dubbed with this title as it can be seen inscribed on her tombstone in the graveyard of Ali Pasha 1255 AH, and then it was dubbed on Khadija Hanim, the wife of Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Muhammad Ali. It can be seen in the text of establishing her grave in 1277 AH⁽²²⁾. It was also inscribed on the tombstone of Fatima Bent Mohammed Othman, Al-Sett Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah and al-Sett Mestamlik.

كريمة: Karimat which means “The Daughter”:-

This title took the feminine form in many inscriptions in the Mamluk Egyptian architecture to refer to the meaning of filiation (daughter). It was inscribed on the tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik in an indication that she is the daughter of al-Sett Hanim the daughter of the late Sayyed Effendi Ali.

²⁰Hassan Albasha, Al-Funoon Al-Islameya wal Waza'if ala al-Athaar al-Arabeya", Part 2, Dar al-Nahda al-Arabeya, Cairo, 1966, p.257.

²¹ Hassan Albasha, Al-Alqab Al-Islameya Fe al-Tarikh wal Watha'iq wal Athaar,p.145.

²² Mustafa barkat, Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Al-Othmania dirasa fi Tawatur Al-Alqab wal Wazaif Monzo Alfath Alothmani li Misr hata Algha Al-Khalifa Alothmaniya,p.177.

Epithet Titles: -

المرحوم: al-Marhoum (the Late): -

An Epithet qualifying the deceased and this is almost common among the Muslims as they often mention the deceased person's name in talking or writing preceded by the wording of the late as a kind of respect to the deceased and alert to the listener and reader that such a person is not alive. In addition, this epithet stemmed from the hope that God may have mercy upon the deceased ⁽²³⁾.

This title was inscribed on the tombstone of Fatima Bent Mohammed Othman, Mohammed al-Subei', Ismail al-Subei', Tawfiq Sayyed Ali, al-Sett Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah, Huda Tulba al-Subei' and the tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik.

الـمغفور له: al-Maghfour lahu (the Forgiven): -

It is the participle of ghafara (forgive), it implies the wish that God may forgive the deceased ⁽²⁴⁾. It came in the form of المغفور له (al-Maghfour lahu which means the forgiven) as a title on the tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei', and the tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei'.

Materials used for Making the Tombstones: -

Marble:-

Tombstones are often carved into solids materials, so they were carved and inscribed on the hardest and finest types of marble and limestone. As for the tombstones of al-Subei' family, they were made of marble, i.e., limestone that can be polished. Although many marble types are extracted from Egypt, most of the marbles used currently are imported from foreign countries such as Italy, Turkey and others. As for the most important types of marble and quarries in Egypt: the first type is called al-Assiuti. ⁽²⁵⁾It is extracted from Jebel Selim Pasha near al-Qusair area. There are also other types of marble called Squirrel, Green, Yellow and the coloured in Jebel al-Rukham (the Mount of Marble) near Bayad district in Beni Suef. The latter type is used for tiling floors and walls as well as

²³ Hassan Albasha, Al-Alqab Al-Islameya Fe al-Tarikh wal Watha'iq wal Athaar,p.155.

²⁴ Mustafa Abd Alkarim, Moajam Al-Mustalahat wal' Alqab Altarikhia, Mawswat Alrisala, 1st edition, Beirut, 1996A.D, p. 89.

²⁵ Aatiyat Ibrahim al-Sayed Saudi, "Ar-Rukham fe Asr Dawlet al-Mamālik al-Bahreya", Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University, 1994 AD,p.133.

building fountains. This is in addition to the black marble with black dots that can be found in Aswan (²⁶).

Marble has been used on a large scale in decoration due to its characteristics such as the hardness which made it the most durable decorative material. In addition, it has a natural luster to its polished surface, especially when it reflects the light falling over it. This reflects the beauty of the structure. It is marked with the beauty of its colors besides the easiness of cleansing while ensuring color fastness. There are numerous names of marble as some are called after the names of plants such as the rosa portogallo salmone (المشمشي), Rosa Kali, Hoody Dark , and also the names of animals and birds such as the Ghazal Light, Ghazal Dark, Alzerzori, al-Ghorabi, Alqtqati and al-Zengi marbles. Some types are also called after the place of importation such as the Halabi and Khalili marbles (²⁷).

There are also some defects in marble as the presence of lines or cracks that may lead to its break or irregular polish. These are called "moles". It may also have tiny or bug holes that make it difficult for cutting the marble into pieces or adjusting its edges. Moreover, some can't be incised which is called in Egypt as "Amedi" and some do not reflect the image after being polished and it is called "Al-Saidi"(²⁸). Marble was used in the architecture of tombstones under consideration. See plates (1.3.4.5.6.7).

Limestone: -

Limestone is a sedimentary rock. Its major materials are the minerals calcite and aragonite, which are different crystal forms of calcium carbonate. It varies significantly in terms of type and hardness and can be found in abundance in Egypt. It constitutes the hills bordering the Nile Valley from Cairo to Esna, i.e., along about 500 miles (²⁹). The colors of this kind of stone are red, yellow, gray and light blue. It is one of the most common materials in use as it is used in making the

²⁶Hillenbrand, Islamic Architecture, form, Function and meaning, A. U.C, press, Cairo, 2000, p.110.

²⁷ Aatiyat Ibrahim al-Sayed Saudi, "Ar-Rukham fe Asr Dawlet al-Mamālik al-Bahreya,p135.

²⁸ Husayn Mustafa Husayn, Almaharib Alrrukhamia fi Qahirat Almamalik Albahria "drasat athuria fnya" master thesis, faculty of Archeology, Cairo University, 1981A.D, p. 48.

²⁹ Alfarid luukas , Almwadd Walssinaat monz qudama Almisrin , Tarjamat Zaki 'Axandar , Muhammad Zakari ghoniam, Murajaeat Abdal Hmid Ahmad , maktabat Almadbuli , ist edition, 1991A.D , p.688.

ornaments of buildings entrances. The limestone consists in general of pure oxides found underground in the form of layers. Its mineral density is greater than that of water.

There are many quarries which encouraged extracting many new kinds of stones to be used in ornamenting and decorating buildings as it enabled artists to excel the works of decoration in the known methods. Some artists were able to use other materials of stones that they transported from the ancient monuments, whether Pharaonic, Greek, Roman or Coptic to use in other prominent places. Hence, the stone inscription and polishing in general was associated with the construction industry in order to suit the aimed architecture⁽³⁰⁾.

The limestone is characterized by its multiple types, as there are many types of stones that take significant names such as ‘al-hajar al-ghashim which means the non-polished stone’ and the flint that is used in making thresholds. It is characterized by its hardness and its dark black color. This kind is extracted from Aswan and some parts of Upper Egypt⁽³¹⁾.

There is the sandstone, (sometimes known as arenite) is a clastic sedimentary rock composed mainly of sand-sized minerals or rock grains or the quartz sand resulting from the breakup of the older rock. It can be found stuck due to the presence of very small percentages of the argil, calcium carbonate, iron oxide or silica. It is worth mentioning that there is a special denomination working in manufacturing stones, which is called “Taefat al-hajjarin or the stonecutters”, and they are engaged in the stone industry in Egypt. They are concerned with breaking, carving and engraving stones. They are the craftsmen who have had an important role in Islamic art and some of their names and signatures have been inscribed on their works⁽³²⁾. This raw material can be seen on the tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei’, see plate No. (2) .

Types of Scripts Incised on the Tombstones of al-Subei’s Family: -

First, Thuluth Script: -

In Thuluth, one-third of each letter slopes, from which the name (meaning "a third" in Arabic) comes. An alternative theory to the meaning is that the smallest width of the letter is one third of the widest part. It is an

³⁰ Alfarid Lukas, *Almawadd Walssinaeat monz qudama Almisrin*, p. 695.

³¹ Muhammad Aabdal Eziz Marzuq, *Alfunun Alzakhirofya fi Misr qabl Alfatamin*, IST edition, 1974A.D, *Maktabat Alainjilw Almisria*, p.152

³² Muhammad Aabdal Eziz Marzuq, *Alfunun Alzakhirofya fi Misr qabl Alfatamin*, p.155.

elegant, cursive script, used in medieval times for mosque decoration⁽³³⁾. It is considered the main calligraphy because various calligraphic styles evolved from Thuluth through slight changes of form. Every calligrapher has to master this script to be skillful in many other types of Arabic calligraphy in terms of rules and balances. Persistence in writing the Thuluth strengthens the hand and helps it write other scripts.

Using this type of script started since the late Umayyad dynasty at the hands of Qutba al-Muharar and it was developed later by the calligrapher Ibrahim al-Shagari. This script, i.e., the Thuluth, which was invented by Qutba is a script variety of Kufic that the width of its pen is eight hairs from an animal called the mule⁽³⁴⁾.

The nomination of Thuluth script and its meaning was controversial among the former calligraphers. Some attributed it to fracturing the letter in Thuluth (one-third) to Khatt al-Thulthein (two-thirds Script) as the author of "Minhaj al-Isaba" maintained that the vizier Ibn Muqlah Shirazi stated that the Kufic script had two origins from fourteen.⁽³⁵⁾ The first was the use of scroll pen that was a cylindrical pen made by turning flexible material over and over on itself without folding it. It was often used in writing the ancient versions of the Holy Quran in Medina. The other was Qalam Ghoobar al-Helya that was used for writing very minute letters. It was written with a scroll round pen that had nothing straight at all. It can be said that all forms of Arabic script are derived from these two types. If one-third of the letter's width is straight, it will be called the Thuluth and if two-thirds of the letter's width is straight, then it will be called al-Tulthein Script⁽³⁶⁾.

Other group attributed it to the scroll pen in terms of its width that is equal to twenty-four hair of the mule. Hence, the pen is called Thuluth because its width equals the width of eight hairs of the mule. As for

³³ Khalil Yahiya Nami, Bahath bi Aanwan Asl Alkhat Alarabi wi Tarikh Tatawuriha Ella Ma qabl Alislam, magazine of arts faculty, Egyptian university, 2nd part, 1925A.D, p.40.

³⁴ Mohammed Hamza Ismail al-Haddad, "Musalla al-Muslimin Bel Qahira", A Research Published in the "Al-Kitab al-Tizkari" of the Archaeologist Abdul Rahman Abdul Tawab, Part I, the Supreme Council of Antiquities, Cairo, 2000 AD,p.33.

³⁵ Mustafa Barakat, Alniqush Alkitabia Ala Aamair madinat alQahira fi Alkarn Alttasia Ashar, Dirasa fania Atharia, unpublished PhD thesis, Archeology faculty, Cairo University, 1991A.D, p.256.

³⁶ Ibrahim Jomaa, dirasa fi Tatawur Alkitabab Alkufia Ala Alahjar fi Misr fi Alqurun Alkhmsa Alawla lil Hijra, AlQahira, 1967A.D, p.133.

Qalam al-Nesf (The Half Pen) is called as such because its width equals twelve hairs of the mule, and Qalam al-Thuluth for its width equals eighteen hairs. As for Qalam Mukhtasar al-Tumar or the short scroll pen” its width ranges between eighteen and twenty-four hairs, i.e., between Qalam al-Tumar and Qalam al-Thuluth according to some classical calligraphers⁽³⁷⁾.

They agreed that the longest alifs (ا) in the script of each Qalam (pen) has to be equal to its square width, hence the length of Alif in Qalam al-Tubar is 576 hairs, i.e., the result of multiplying 24x24, the length of Qalam al-Thuluth is 64 hairs, and the length of Qalam al-Thuluth is 256 hairs and at last the length of Qalam al-Nesf is 144 hairs of mule. Nowadays, after the progress of calligraphy and its improvement, new standards of letters according to the Nizam al-Nuqat (system of the dots which bases the proportions of the letters on dot counts) and the Qalam (pen) by which letters are written. They have been able to measure each letter and its parts clearly and accurately and this method has been easier and wiser than the former⁽³⁸⁾.

As for the tombstones, the subject of this research, Thuluth can be seen in the tombstone of Al-sett Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah.

Second: Nasta'liq Script: -

Nasta'liq was developed by combining two existing scripts in the ancient poetry of “Naskh Ta’liq” or “Nasta'liq”, and then they were abbreviated for convenience of use and became "Nasta'liq". This script is also known between non-Iranian calligraphers as the Persian Script as the case in Egypt and the Arab countries⁽³⁹⁾. This designation spread on the grounds that the basics of this script were developed in Islamic Persia and extended to other Muslim countries. However, some called this type of script as "Ta’liq" erroneously because the “Ta’liq” script is another type of calligraphy that is still in use in Iran and it differs in its forms from the "Nasta'liq"⁽⁴⁰⁾.

³⁷ Mohammed Ali Mahmoud ,jamaliat Alkitab Alarabi fa Alamara al'islamia kamadkhal li tajmil waijih al mabani, Ph.D master, faculty of al-tarbia al-fannia, halwan university, 2001A.D, p. 132.

³⁸ Khalil Yahya Nami, Bahath bi Aanwan Asl Alkhat Alarabi wi Tarikh Tatawuriha Ella Ma qabl Alislam,p.45.

³⁹ Hassan Albasha, Ahammiat Shawahid Alqubur bi wasfiha msdaran litarikh Aljazeera Alearabiat fi Alathr Alislamiya, 1979A.D, p.169.

⁴⁰ Mustafa Barakat, Alniqush Alkitabia Ala Aamair madinat alQahira fi Alkarn Alttasia Ashar, Dirasa fania Atharia,p.258.

It was used also in inscriptions written on the tombstones to record death. As for the present research, it can be seen in the tombstones in question. See plates (1, 2, 3,4,5,6).

Concluding Remarks:-

- The study sheds light on seven tombstones, which are published for the first time, to the family of al- Subei' in Minya governorate that had an important role in the social life of this region.
- The study showed the ways of recording the date of death on the tombstones of the family of al- Subei', which had its own character in terms of the simplicity of words and titles as well as the scripts inscriptions for decoration, their chronologies in Hijri and Gregorian, which was not seen in the tombstones of the former or contemporary eras, as the Hijri calendar was prevalent in recording the date of death.
- The study dealt with the use of marble and limestone in making the tombstones of this family as they were frequently used in such a period of the twentieth century and even before because they were considered the origin of other materials that can withstand the factors of time and due to their durability.
- The study showed use of Thuluth and Nasta'liq Jali in writing on the tombstones of al- Subei's family. They followed the tradition of the prevailing Turkish Ottoman School before or contemporary to this period, as well as the traditions of the Egyptian school in Arabic calligraphy, which prevailed on the same tradition of its precedent Turkish school.
- The study attracted the attention of those interested and engaged in studying the monuments and archaeological inscriptions, as well as those interested in relevant studies in the tourist guidance field to the importance of tombstones in Zawyet Sultan cemetery that is the largest cemetery in Minya governorate. This may entail doing further researches.
- The study also drew the attention to the importance of this cemetery and its archaeological treasures that can be exploited in tourism by making their necessary preservation to put it on the tourist map of Minya. It is noticed that many infringements took place and some tombstones of aesthetic nature were stolen, especially after the January 2011 Revolution and its subsequent lack of security.

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Pl.1Tombstone of al-Sett Mestamlik (photographed by researcher published for first time)



Pl.2-Tombstone of Tulba Ali al-Subei (photographed by researcher published for first time)



Pl.3- the Tombstone of Mohammed al-Subei' and his Brothers
(Photographed by researcher published for first time)



Pl.4-Tombstone of Fatima the daughter of Mohammed Othma
(Photographed by researcher published for first time)



Pl.5- Tombstone of Mahmoud Bey Tulba al-Subei'
(Photographed by researcher published for first time)



Pl.6- Tombstone of Huda Tulba al-Subei'

(Photographed by researcher published for first time)



Pl.7- Tombstone of Hanim Ibrahim Fazlah

(Photographed by researcher published for first time)

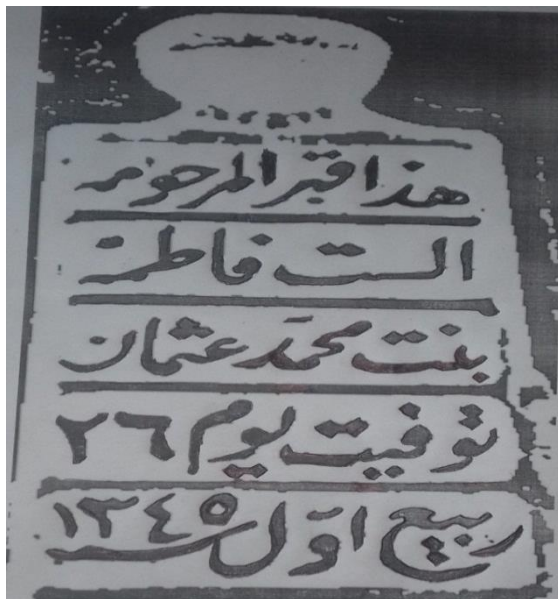


fig.1- Tombstone of Fatima the daughter of Mohammed Othman

(Made by researcher)

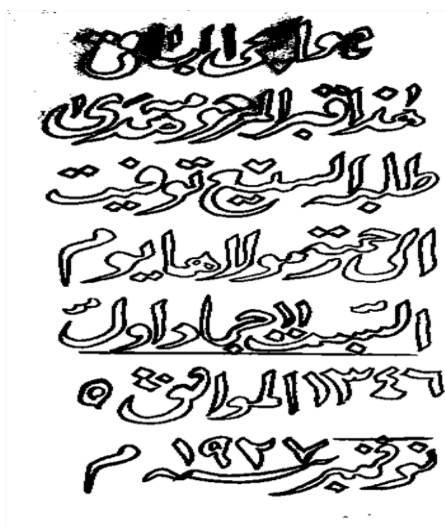


Fig.2- Tombstone of Huda Tulba al-Subei'

(Made by researcher)

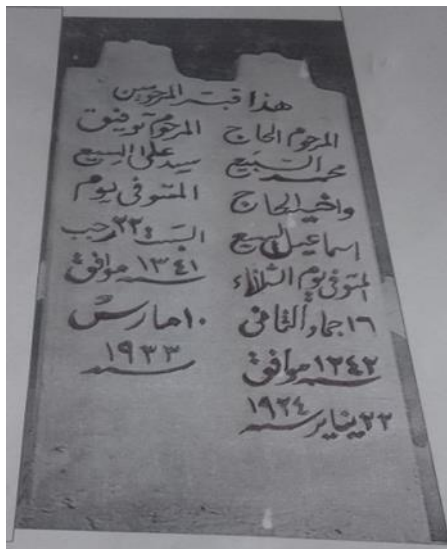


Fig.3- the Tombstone of Mohammed al-Subei' and his Brothers

(Made by researcher)



Fig.4-Tombstone of Huda Tulba al-Subei'

(Made by researcher)